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NORWICH EDITION

VOLUME XII

GEORGE BORROW

WILD WALES

ITS PEOPLE, LANGUAGE AND SCENERY

'Their Lord they shall praise,
Their language they shall keep,
Their land they shall lose,
Except Wild Wales.'

TALIESIN: *Destiny of the Britons.*

VOLUME I

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BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

It was the Welsh groom Lhuyd who taught George Borrow the elements of the Welsh language, when he was studying it in his early days as an articled clerk in Norwich. He probably wandered through Wales more than once, but the first known journey was in 1854. Of this Dr. Knapp possessed a record written in four little note-books of the type which Borrow carried on all his journeys. He did not, however, use the material in these and other note-books for the writing of 'Wild Wales' until 1862. John Murray, who in that year issued the book in a three-volume edition of one thousand copies, was sceptical as to its financial prospects, and even mildly suggested to Mrs. Borrow that her husband might be better advised to try some other publisher.

'Wild Wales' was on the whole very coldly received, although *The Spectator* declared that it was 'a really clever book' written by 'an experienced, shrewd and discerning traveller,' and the book actually produced a profit of £531, 14s., which was equally divided between author and publisher. But there were no Borrovians then, and the patriotic revival of Welsh literature had not yet begun. The popularity of the work did not continue, and only seven

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thousand copies were published while it remained in copyright.

It is interesting to note that Mr. Murray requested that the original manuscript should be curtailed somewhat, and that this was done. Fortune threw the complete manuscript into my hands, and later led me to pass it over to Professor Herbert Wright of University College, Bangor. Thanks to his labours this edition contains a very large quantity of entirely unprinted matter. Some fragments of this newly discovered material have already been printed in *The Welsh Outlook* by Professor Wright, with my permission and with that of Mr. Thomas Wise, who is the owner of certain portions of the manuscript, but the bulk of it will prove to be entirely new.

The passages cancelled in the original manuscript are followed by a number of chapters which are certainly connected with the subject-matter of 'Wild Wales'; but only one of these (that referring to Rhys Goch, which was probably intended to follow Ch. XLVII.) may with confidence be considered as actually part of that work. Of the remaining items included in the present edition, Borrow's Essay on Welsh Literature has hitherto been quite unknown; while the introduction to 'Wild Wales,' and the last chapter on the Welsh language, were published only in later editions of the work.

I doubt not but that many Welsh readers will thank me for including in this Note a letter from Sir Lewis Morris (1833-1907) written in

1862 to George Borrow, which I found among the Borrow Papers that came to me :—

'I have just finished reading your work on Wild Wales, and cannot refrain from writing to thank you for the very lifelike picture of the Welsh people, North and South, which unlike other Englishmen you have managed to give us. To ordinary Englishmen the language is of course an insurmountable bar to any real knowledge of the people, and the result is that within six hours of Paddington or Euston Square is a country nibbled at superficially by droves of holiday makers, but not really better known than Asia Minor. I wish it were possible to get rid of all obstacles which stand in the way of the development of the Welsh people and the Welsh intellect. In the mean time every book which like yours tends to lighten the thick darkness which seems to hang round Wales deserves the acknowledgments of every true Welshman. I am perhaps more especially called upon to express my thanks for the very high terms in which you speak of my great-grandfather, Lewis Morris. I believe you have not said a word more than he deserves. Some of the facts which you mention with regard to him were unknown to me, and as I take a very great interest in everything relating to my ancestor, I venture to ask you whether you can indicate any source of knowledge with regard to him and his life other than those which I have at present—viz. an old number of the Cambrian Register and some notices of him in the Gentleman's Magazine 1760-70. There is also a letter of his in Lord Teignmouth's Life of Sir William Jones in which he claims kindred with that great scholar. Many of his manuscript poems and much correspondence, are now in the Library of the British Museum, most of them, I regret to say, a sealed book to one who like myself

have yet to learn Welsh. But I am not the less anxious to learn all that can be ascertained about my great ancestor. I should say that two of his brothers, Richard and William, were eminent Welsh scholars.

'With apologies for addressing you so unceremoniously, and with renewed thanks.'

I have to thank Professor Herbert Wright for his indefatigable zeal in preparing this, the only complete edition of what is now recognized to be a great classic; and Mr. Thomas Wise for the generous loan of a portion of the manuscript.

C. K. S.

INTRODUCTORY

WALES is a country interesting in many respects, and deserving of more attention than it has hitherto met with. Though not very extensive, it is one of the most picturesque countries in the world, a country in which Nature displays herself in her wildest, boldest, and occasionally loveliest forms. The inhabitants, who speak an ancient and peculiar language, do not call this region Wales, nor themselves Welsh. They call themselves Cymry or Cumry, and their country Cymru, or the land of the Cumry. Wales or Wallia, however, is the true, proper, and without doubt original name, as it relates not to any particular race, which at present inhabits it, or may have sojourned in it at any long bygone period, but to the country itself. Wales signifies a land of mountains, of vales, of dingles, chasms and springs. It is connected with the Cumric bal, a protuberance, a springing forth; with the Celtic beul or beal, a mouth; with the old English welle, a fountain; with the original name of Italy, still called by the Germans Welschland; with Balkan and Vulcan, both of which signify a casting out, an eruption; with Welint or Wayland, the name of the Anglo-Saxon god of the forge; with the Chaldee val, a forest, and the German wald; with the English bluff, and the Sanscrit palava — startling assertions, no

doubt, at least to some; which are, however, quite true, and which at some future time will be universally acknowledged so to be.

But it is not for its scenery alone that Wales is deserving of being visited; scenery soon palls unless it is associated with remarkable events and the names of remarkable men. Perhaps there is no country in the whole world which has been the scene of events more stirring and remarkable than those recorded in the history of Wales. What other country has been the scene of a struggle so deadly, so embittered, and protracted as that between the Cumro and the Saxon?—A struggle which did not terminate at Caernarvon, when Edward Longshanks foisted his young son upon the Welsh chieftains as Prince of Wales; but was kept up till the battle of Bosworth Field, when a prince of Cumric blood won the crown of fair Britain, verifying the olden word which had cheered the hearts of the Ancient Britons for at least a thousand years, even in times of the darkest distress and gloom:—

> 'But after long pain
> Repose we shall obtain,
> When sway barbaric has purg'd us clean;
> And Britons shall regain
> Their crown and their domain,
> And the foreign oppressor be no more seen.'

Of remarkable men Wales has assuredly produced its full share. First, to speak of men of action:—there was Madoc, the son of Owain Gwynedd, who discovered America, centuries before Columbus was born; then there was 'the

irregular and wild Glendower,' who turned rebel at the age of sixty, was crowned King of Wales at Machynlleth, and for fourteen years contrived to hold his own against the whole power of England; then there was Ryce Ap Thomas, the best soldier of his time, whose hands placed the British crown on the brow of Henry the Seventh, and whom bluff Henry the Eighth delighted to call Father Preece; then there was—who?—why, Harry Morgan, who led those tremendous fellows the Buccaneers across the Isthmus of Darien to the sack and burning of Panamá.

What, a buccaneer in the list? Ay! and why not? Morgan was a scourge, it is true, but he was a scourge of God on the cruel Spaniards of the New World, the merciless task-masters and butchers of the Indian race: on which account God favoured and prospered him, permitting him to attain the noble age of ninety, and to die peacefully and tranquilly at Jamaica, whilst smoking his pipe in his shady arbour, with his smiling plantation of sugar-canes full in view. How unlike the fate of Harry Morgan to that of Lolonois, a being as daring and enterprising as the Welshman, but a monster without ruth or discrimination, terrible to friend and foe, who perished by the hands, not of the Spaniards, but of the Indians, who tore him limb from limb, burning his members, yet quivering, in the fire—which very Indians Morgan contrived to make his own firm friends, and whose difficult language he spoke with the same facility as English, Spanish, and his own South Welsh.

For men of genius Wales during a long period was particularly celebrated. Who has not heard of the Welsh Bards? though it is true that, beyond the borders of Wales, only a very few are acquainted with their songs, owing to the language, by no means an easy one, in which they were composed. Honour to them all! everlasting glory to the three greatest—Taliesin, Ab Gwilym, and Gronwy Owen: the first a professed Christian, but in reality a Druid, whose poems fling great light on the doctrines of the primitive priesthood of Europe, which correspond remarkably with the philosophy of the Hindus, before the time of Brahma: the second the grand poet of Nature, the contemporary of Chaucer, but worth half a dozen of the accomplished word-master, the ingenious versifier of Norman and Italian tales: the third a learned and irreproachable minister of the Church of England, and one of the greatest poets of the last century, who, after several narrow escapes from starvation both in England and Wales, died master of a paltry school at New Brunswick, in North America, sometime about the year 1780.

But Wales has something besides its wonderful scenery, its eventful history, and its illustrious men of yore to interest the visitor. Wales has a population, and a remarkable one. There are countries, besides Wales, abounding with noble scenery, rich in eventful histories, and which are not sparingly dotted with the birthplaces of heroes and poets, in which at the present day

there is either no population at all, or one of a character which is anything but attractive. Of a country in the first predicament, the Scottish Highlands afford an example. What a country is that Highland region! What scenery! and what associations! If Wales has its Snowdon and Cader Idris, the Highlands have their Hill of the Water Dogs, and that of the Swarthy Swine. If Wales has a history, so have the Highlands—not indeed so remarkable as that of Wales, but eventful enough. If Wales has had its heroes, its Glendower and Father Pryce, the Highlands have had their Evan Cameron and Ranald of Moydart. If Wales has had its romantic characters, its Griffith Ap Nicholas and Harry Morgan, the Highlands have had Rob Roy and that strange fellow Donald Macleod, the man of the broadsword, the leader of the Freacadan Dhu, who at Fontenoy caused the Lord only knows how many Frenchmen's heads to fly off their shoulders, who lived to the age of one hundred and seven, and at seventy-one performed gallant service on the Heights of Abraham; wrapped in whose plaid the dying Wolfe was carried from the hill of victory. If Wales has been a land of song, have not the Highlands also? If Wales can boast of Ab Gwilym and Gronwy, the Highlands can boast of Ossian and MacIntyre. In many respects the two regions are equals or nearly so; in one respect, however, a matter of the present day, and a very important matter too, they are anything but equals; Wales has a population—but where is

that of the Highlands ?—Plenty of noble scenery ; plenty of delightful associations, historical, poetical and romantic—but, but, where is the population ?

The population of Wales has not departed across the Atlantic, like that of the Highlands ; it remains at home, and a remarkable population it is—very different from the present inhabitants of several beautiful lands of olden fame, who have strangely degenerated from their forefathers. Wales has not only a population, but a highly interesting one—hardy and frugal, yet kind and hospitable—a bit crazed, it is true, on the subject of religion, but still retaining plenty of old Celtic peculiarities, and still speaking—Diolch i Duw !—the language of Glendower and the Bards.

The present is a book about Wales and Welsh matters. He who does me the honour of perusing it will be conducted to many a spot not only remarkable for picturesqueness, but for having been the scene of some extraordinary event, or the birthplace or residence of a hero or a man of genius ; he will likewise be not unfrequently introduced to the genuine Welsh, and made acquainted with what they have to say about Cumro and Saxon, buying and selling, fattening hogs and poultry, Methodism and baptism, and the poor, persecuted Church of England.

An account of the language of Wales will be found in the last chapter. It has many features and words in common with the Sanscrit, and many which seem peculiar to itself, or rather to

the family of languages, generally called the Celtic, to which it belongs. Though not an original tongue, for indeed no original tongue, or anything approximating to one, at present exists, it is certainly of immense antiquity, indeed almost entitled in that respect to dispute the palm with the grand tongue of India, on which in some respects it flings nearly as much elucidation as it itself receives in others. Amongst the words quoted in the chapter alluded to I wish particularly to direct the reader's attention to gwr, a man, and gwres, heat; to which may be added gwreichionen, a spark. Does not the striking similarity between these words warrant the supposition that the ancient Cumry entertained the idea that man and fire were one and the same, even like the ancient Hindus, who believed that man sprang from fire, and whose word vira,[1] which signifies a strong man, a hero, signifies also fire?

There are of course faults and inaccuracies in the work; but I have reason to believe that they are neither numerous nor important. I may have occasionally given a wrong name to a hill or a brook; or may have overstated or understated, by a furlong, the distance between one hamlet and another; or even committed the

[1] That vira at one time meant man in general, as well as fire, there can be no doubt. It is singular how this word, or something strikingly like it, occurs in various European languages, sometimes as man, sometimes as fire. Vir in Latin signifies man, but vuur in Dutch signifies fire. In like manner fear in Irish signifies a man, but fire in English signifies the consuming, or, as the Hindus would call it, the producing element.

blunder of saying that Mr. Jones Ap Jenkins lived in this or that homestead, whereas in reality Mr. Jenkins Ap Jones honoured it with his residence: I may be chargeable with such inaccuracies; in which case I beg to express due sorrow for them, and at the same time a hope that I have afforded information about matters relating to Wales which more than atones for them. It would be as well if those who exhibit eagerness to expose the faults of a book would occasionally have the candour to say a word or two about its merits; such a wish, however, is not likely to be gratified, unless indeed they wisely take a hint from the following lines, translated from a cywydd of the last of the great poets of Wales:—

> 'All can perceive a fault, where there is one—
> A dirty scamp will find one, where there 's none.' [1]

[1] 'Pawb a'i cenfydd, o bydd bai,
A Bawddyn, er na byddai.'—Gronwy Owen.

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WILD WALES

ITS PEOPLE, LANGUAGE, AND SCENERY

CHAPTER I

Proposed Excursion—Knowledge of Welsh—Singular Groom — Harmonious Distich — Welsh Pronunciation—Dafydd Ab Gwilym.

In the summer of the year 1854 myself, wife, and daughter determined upon going into Wales, to pass a few months there. We are country people of a corner of East Anglia, and, at the time of which I am speaking, had been residing so long on our own little estate, that we had become tired of the objects around us, and conceived that we should be all the better for changing the scene for a short period. We were undetermined for some time with respect to where we should go. I proposed Wales from the first, but my wife and daughter, who have always had rather a hankering after what is fashionable, said they thought it would be more advisable to go to Harrowgate, or Leamington. On my observing that those were terrible places for expense, they replied that, though the price of corn had of late been shamefully low, we had a spare hundred pounds or two in our pockets, and could afford to pay for a little insight into fashionable life. I told them that there was nothing I so much hated as

fashionable life, but that, as I was anything but a selfish person, I would endeavour to stifle my abhorrence of it for a time, and attend them either to Leamington or Harrowgate. By this speech I obtained my wish, even as I knew I should, for my wife and daughter instantly observed, that, after all, they thought we had better go into Wales, which, though not so fashionable as either Leamington or Harrowgate, was a very nice picturesque country, where, they had no doubt, they should get on very well, more especially as I was acquainted with the Welsh language.

It was my knowledge of Welsh, such as it was, that made me desirous that we should go to Wales, where there was a chance that I might turn it to some little account. In my boyhood I had been something of a philologist; had picked up some Latin and Greek at school; some Irish in Ireland, where I had been with my father, who was in the army; and subsequently whilst an articled clerk to the first solicitor in East Anglia—indeed I may say the prince of all English solicitors—for he was a gentleman, had learnt some Welsh, partly from books, and partly from a Welsh groom whose acquaintance I made. A queer groom he was, and well deserving of having his portrait drawn. He might be about forty-seven years of age, and about five feet eight inches in height; his body was spare and wiry; his chest rather broad, and his arms remarkably long; his legs were of the kind generally known as spindle-

shanks, but vigorous withal, for they carried his body with great agility; neck he had none, at least that I ever observed; and his head was anything but high, not measuring, I should think, more than four inches from the bottom of the chin to the top of the forehead; his cheek-bones were high, his eyes grey and deeply sunken in his face, with an expression in them, partly sullen, and partly irascible; his complexion was indescribable; the little hair which he had, which was almost entirely on the sides and the back part of his head, was of an iron-grey hue. He wore a leather hat on ordinary days, low at the crown, and with the side eaves turned up. A dirty pepper-and-salt coat, a waistcoat which had once been red, but which had lost its pristine colour, and looked brown; dirty yellow leather breeches, grey worsted stockings, and high-lows. Surely I was right when I said he was a very different groom to those of the present day, whether Welsh or English? What say you, Sir Watkin? What say you, my Lord of Exeter? He looked after the horses, and occasionally assisted in the house of a person who lived at the end of an alley, in which the office of the gentleman to whom I was articled was situated, and having to pass by the door of the office half-a-dozen times in the day, he did not fail to attract the notice of the clerks, who, sometimes individually, sometimes by twos, sometimes by threes, or even more, not unfrequently stood at the door, bareheaded—mis-spending the time which was

not legally their own. Sundry observations, none of them very flattering, did the clerks, and amongst them myself, make upon the groom, as he passed and repassed, some of them direct, others somewhat oblique. To these he made no reply save by looks, which had in them something dangerous and menacing, and clenching without raising his fists, which looked singularly hard and horny. At length a whisper ran about the alley that the groom was a Welshman; this whisper much increased the malice of my brother clerks against him, who were now whenever he passed the door, and they happened to be there by twos or threes, in the habit of saying something, as if by accident, against Wales and Welshmen, and, individually or together, were in the habit of shouting out 'Taffy,' when he was at some distance from them, and his back was turned, or regaling his ears with the harmonious and well-known distich of 'Taffy was a Welshman, Taffy was a thief: Taffy came to my house and stole a piece of beef.' It had, however, a very different effect upon me. I was trying to learn Welsh, and the idea occurring to me that the groom might be able to assist me in my pursuit, I instantly lost all desire to torment him, and determined to do my best to scrape acquaintance with him, and persuade him to give me what assistance he could in Welsh. I succeeded; how I will not trouble the reader with describing: he and I became great friends, and he taught me what Welsh he could. In return for his instructions

I persuaded my brother clerks to leave off holloing after him, and to do nothing further to hurt his feelings, which had been very deeply wounded, so much so, that after the first two or three lessons he told me in confidence that on the morning of the very day I first began to conciliate him he had come to the resolution of doing one of two things, namely, either to hang himself from the balk of the hay-loft, or to give his master warning, both of which things he told me he should have been very unwilling to do, more particularly as he had a wife and family. He gave me lessons on Sunday afternoons, at my father's house, where he made his appearance very respectably dressed, in a beaver hat, blue surtout, whitish waistcoat, black trowsers and Wellingtons, all with a somewhat ancient look—the Wellingtons I remember were slightly pieced at the sides—but all upon the whole very respectable. I wished at first to persuade him to give me lessons in the office, but could not succeed: 'No, no, lad,' said he; 'catch me going in there: I would just as soon venture into a nest of parcupines.' To translate from books I had already, to a certain degree, taught myself, and at his first visit I discovered, and he himself acknowledged, that at book Welsh I was stronger than himself, but I learnt Welsh pronunciation from him, and to discourse a little in the Welsh tongue. 'Had you much difficulty in acquiring the sound of the *ll*?' I think I hear the reader inquire. None whatever: the double *l* of the Welsh is by no means

the terrible guttural which English people generally suppose it to be, being in reality a pretty liquid, exactly resembling in sound the Spanish *ll*, the sound of which I had mastered before commencing Welsh, and which is equivalent to the English *lh*; so being able to pronounce llano I had of course no difficulty in pronouncing Lluyd, which by the bye was the name of the groom.

I remember that I found the pronunciation of the Welsh far less difficult than I had found the grammar, the most remarkable feature of which is the mutation, under certain circumstances, of particular consonants, when forming the initials of words. This feature I had observed in the Irish, which I had then only learnt by ear.

But to return to the groom. He was really a remarkable character, and taught me two or three things besides Welsh pronunciation; and to discourse a little in Cumraeg. He had been a soldier in his youth, and had served under Moore and Wellington in the Peninsular campaigns, and from him I learnt the details of many a bloody field and bloodier storm, of the sufferings of poor British soldiers, and the tyranny of haughty British officers; more especially of the two commanders just mentioned, the first of whom he swore was shot by his own soldiers, and the second more frequently shot at by British than French. But it is not deemed a matter of good taste to write about such low people as grooms, I shall therefore dismiss

him with no observation further than that after he had visited me on Sunday afternoons for about a year he departed for his own country with his wife, who was an Englishwoman, and his children, in consequence of having been left a small freehold there by a distant relation, and that I neither saw nor heard of him again.

But though I had lost my oral instructor I had still my silent ones, namely, the Welsh books, and of these I made such use that before the expiration of my clerkship I was able to read not only Welsh prose, but, what was infinitely more difficult, Welsh poetry in any of the four-and-twenty measures, and was well versed in the compositions of various of the old Welsh bards, especially those of Dafydd ab Gwilym, whom, since the time when I first became acquainted with his works, I have always considered as the greatest poetical genius that has appeared in Europe since the revival of literature.

After this exordium I think I may proceed to narrate the journey of myself and family into Wales. As perhaps, however, it will be thought that, though I have said quite enough about myself and a certain groom, I have not said quite enough about my wife and daughter, I will add a little more about them. Of my wife I will merely say that she is a perfect paragon of wives—can make puddings and sweets and treacle posset, and is the best woman of business in Eastern Anglia—of my step-daughter—for such she is, though I generally call her daughter, and with good reason, seeing that she has always

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shown herself a daughter to me—that she has all kinds of good qualities, and several accomplishments, knowing something of conchology, more of botany, drawing capitally in the Dutch style, and playing remarkably well on the guitar—not the trumpery German thing so-called—but the real Spanish guitar.

CHAPTER II

The Starting — Peterborough Cathedral — Anglo-Saxon Names—Kæmpe Viser—Steam—Norman Barons—Chester Ale—Sion Tudor—Pretty Welsh Tongue.

So our little family, consisting of myself, my wife Mary, and my daughter Henrietta, for daughter I shall persist in calling her, started for Wales in the afternoon of the 27th July 1854. We flew through part of Norfolk and Cambridgeshire in a train which we left at Ely, and getting into another, which did not fly quite so fast as the one we had quitted, reached the Peterborough station at about six o'clock of a delightful evening. We proceeded no farther on our journey that day, in order that we might have an opportunity of seeing the cathedral.

Sallying arm in arm from the Station Hotel, where we had determined to take up our quarters for the night, we crossed a bridge over the deep quiet Nen, on the southern bank of which stands the station, and soon arrived at the cathedral—unfortunately we were too late to procure admission into the interior, and had to content ourselves with walking round it and surveying its outside.

It is named after, and occupies the site, or part of the site of an immense monastery, founded by the Mercian King Peda in the year 665, and destroyed by fire in the year 1116, which

monastery, though originally termed Medeshamsted, or the homestead on the meads, was subsequently termed Peterborough, from the circumstance of its having been reared by the old Saxon monarch for the love of God and the honour of Saint Peter, as the Saxon Chronicle says, a book which I went through carefully in my younger days, when I studied Saxon, for, as I have already told the reader, I was in those days a bit of a philologist. Like the first, the second edifice was originally a monastery, and continued so till the time of the Reformation; both were abodes of learning; for if the Saxon Chronicle was commenced in the monkish cells of the first, it was completed in those of the second. What is at present called Peterborough Cathedral is a noble venerable pile, equal upon the whole in external appearance to the cathedrals of Toledo, Burgos and Leon, all of which I have seen. Nothing in architecture can be conceived more beautiful than the principal entrance, which fronts the west, and which, at the time we saw it, was gilded with the rays of the setting sun.

After having strolled about the edifice surveying it until we were weary, we returned to our inn, and after taking an excellent supper retired to rest.

At ten o'clock next morning we left the capital of the meads. With dragon speed, and dragon noise, fire, smoke, and fury, the train dashed along its road through beautiful meadows, garnished here and there with pollard sallows; over pretty streams, whose waters stole along

imperceptibly; by venerable old churches, which I vowed I would take the first opportunity of visiting: stopping now and then to recruit its energies at places, whose old Anglo-Saxon names stared me in the eyes from station boards, as specimens of which, let me only dot down Willy Thorpe, Ringsted, and Yrthling Boro. Quite forgetting everything Welsh, I was enthusiastically Saxon the whole way from Medeshamsted to Blissworth, so thoroughly Saxon was the country, with its rich meads, its old churches and its names. After leaving Blissworth, a thoroughly Saxon place by the bye, as its name shows, signifying the stronghold or possession of Bligh or Blee, I became less Saxon; the country was rather less Saxon, and I caught occasionally the word 'by' on a board, the Danish for a town; which 'by' waked in me a considerable portion of Danish enthusiasm, of which I have plenty, and with reason, having translated the glorious Kæmpe Viser over the desk of my ancient master, the gentleman solicitor of East Anglia. At length we drew near the great workshop of England, called by some, Brummagem or Bromwicham, by others Birmingham, and I fell into a philological revery, wondering which was the right name. Before, however, we came to the station, I decided that both names were right enough, but that Bromwicham was the original name; signifying the home on the broomie moor, which name it lost in polite parlance for Birmingham, or the home of the son of Biarmer, when a certain man of Danish blood, called

Biarming, or the son of Biarmer, got possession of it, whether by force, fraud, or marriage—the latter, by the bye, is by far the best way of getting possession of an estate—this deponent neither knoweth nor careth. At Birmingham station I became a modern Englishman, enthusiastically proud of modern England's science and energy; that station alone is enough to make one proud of being a modern Englishman. Oh, what an idea does that station, with its thousand trains dashing off in all directions, or arriving from all quarters, give of modern English science and energy. My modern English pride accompanied me all the way to Tipton; for all along the route there were wonderful evidences of English skill and enterprise; in chimneys high as cathedral spires, vomiting forth smoke, furnaces emitting flame and lava, and in the sound of gigantic hammers, wielded by steam, the Englishman's slave. After passing Tipton, at which place one leaves the great working district behind, I became for a considerable time a yawning, listless Englishman, without pride, enthusiasm, or feeling of any kind, from which state I was suddenly roused by the sight of ruined edifices on the tops of hills. They were remains of castles built by Norman Barons. Here, perhaps, the reader will expect from me a burst of Norman enthusiasm: if so he will be mistaken; I have no Norman enthusiasm, and hate and abominate the name of Norman, for I have always associated that name with the deflowering of helpless Englishwomen, the plundering of

English homesteads, and the tearing out of poor Englishmen's eyes. The sight of those edifices, now in ruins, but which were once the strongholds of plunder, violence, and lust, made me almost ashamed of being an Englishman, for they brought to my mind the indignities to which poor English blood has been subjected. I sat silent and melancholy, till looking from the window I caught sight of a long line of hills, which I guessed to be the Welsh hills, as indeed they proved, which sight causing me to remember that I was bound for Wales, the land of the bard, made me cast all gloomy thoughts aside and glow with all the Welsh enthusiasm with which I glowed when I first started in the direction of Wales.

On arriving at Chester, at which place we intended to spend two or three days, we put up at an old-fashioned inn in Northgate Street, to which we had been recommended; my wife and daughter ordered tea and its accompaniments, and I ordered ale, and that which always should accompany it, cheese. 'The ale I shall find bad,' said I; Chester ale had a villainous character in the time of old Sion Tudor, who made a first-rate englyn upon it, and it has scarcely improved since; 'but I shall have a treat in the cheese, Cheshire cheese has always been reckoned excellent, and now that I am in the capital of the cheese country, of course I shall have some of the very prime.' Well, the tea, loaf and butter made their appearance, and with them my cheese and ale. To my horror

the cheese had much the appearance of soap of the commonest kind, which indeed I found it much resembled in taste, on putting a small portion into my mouth. 'Ah,' said I, after I had opened the window and ejected the half-masticated morsel into the street; 'those who wish to regale on good Cheshire cheese must not come to Chester, no more than those who wish to drink first-rate coffee must go to Mocha. I'll now see whether the ale is drinkable'; so I took a little of the ale into my mouth, and instantly going to the window, spirted it out after the cheese. 'Of a surety,' said I, 'Chester ale must be of much the same quality as it was in the time of Sion Tudor, who spoke of it to the following effect:—

> "Chester ale, Chester ale! I could ne'er get it down,
> 'Tis made of ground-ivy, of dirt, and of bran,
> 'Tis as thick as a river below a huge town!
> 'Tis not lap for a dog, far less drink for a man."

Well! if I have been deceived in the cheese, I have at any rate not been deceived in the ale, which I expected to find execrable. Patience! I shall not fall into a passion, more especially as there are things I can fall back upon. Wife! I will trouble you for a cup of tea. Henrietta! have the kindness to cut me a slice of bread and butter.'

Upon the whole, we found ourselves very comfortable in the old-fashioned inn, which was kept by a nice old-fashioned gentlewoman, with the assistance of three servants, namely, a 'boots' and two strapping chambermaids, one

of which was a Welsh girl, with whom I soon scraped acquaintance, not, I assure the reader, for the sake of the pretty Welsh eyes which she carried in her head, but for the sake of the pretty Welsh tongue which she carried in her mouth, from which I confess occasionally proceeded sounds which, however pretty, I was quite unable to understand.

CHAPTER III

Chester — The Rows — Lewis Glyn Cothi — Tragedy of Mold—Native of Antigua—Slavery and the Americans—The Tents—Saturday Night.

On the morning after our arrival we went out together, and walked up and down several streets; my wife and daughter, however, soon leaving me to go into a shop, I strolled about by myself. Chester is an ancient town with walls and gates, a prison called a castle, built on the site of an ancient keep, an unpretending-looking red sandstone cathedral, two or three handsome churches, several good streets, and certain curious places called rows. The Chester row is a broad arched stone gallery running parallel with the street within the façades of the houses; it is partly open on the side of the street, and just one story above it. Within the rows, of which there are three or four, are shops, every shop being on that side which is farthest from the street. All the best shops in Chester are to be found in the rows. These rows, to which you ascend by stairs up narrow passages, were originally built for the security of the wares of the principal merchants against the Welsh. Should the mountaineers break into the town, as they frequently did, they might rifle some of the common shops, where their booty would be slight, but those which contained the more costly articles would

be beyond their reach; for at the first alarm the doors of the passages, up which the stairs led, would be closed, and all access to the upper streets cut off, from the open arches of which missiles of all kinds, kept ready for such occasions, could be discharged upon the intruders, who would be soon glad to beat a retreat. These rows and the walls are certainly the most remarkable memorials of old times which Chester has to boast of.

Upon the walls it is possible to make the whole compass of the city, there being a good but narrow walk upon them. The northern wall abuts upon a frightful ravine, at the bottom of which is a canal. From the western one there is a noble view of the Welsh hills.

As I stood gazing upon the hills from the wall a ragged man came up and asked for charity.

'Can you tell me the name of that tall hill?' said I, pointing in the direction of the south-west. 'That hill, sir,' said the beggar, 'is called Moel Vamagh; I ought to know something about it as I was born at its foot.' 'Moel,' said I, 'a bald hill; Vamagh, maternal or motherly. Moel Vamagh, the Mother Moel.' 'Just so, sir,' said the beggar; 'I see you are a Welshman, like myself, though I suppose you come from the South—Moel Vamagh is the Mother Moel, and is called so because it is the highest of all the Moels.' 'Did you ever hear of a place called Mold?' said I. 'O yes, your honour,' said the beggar; 'many a time; and many 's the time I have been there.' 'In which direction does it lie?' said I.

'Towards Moel Vamagh, your honour,' said the beggar, 'which is a few miles beyond it; you can't see it from here, but look towards Moel Vamagh and you will see over it.' 'Thank you,' said I, and gave something to the beggar, who departed, after first taking off his hat. Long and fixedly did I gaze in the direction of Mold. The reason which induced me to do so was the knowledge of an appalling tragedy transacted there in the old time, in which there is every reason to suppose a certain Welsh bard, called Lewis Glyn Cothi, had a share.

This man, who was a native of South Wales, flourished during the wars of the Roses. Besides being a poetical he was something of a military genius, and had a command of foot in the army of the Lancastrian Jasper Earl of Pembroke, the son of Owen Tudor, and half-brother of Henry the Sixth. After the battle of Mortimer's Cross, in which the Earl's forces were defeated, the warrior bard found his way to Chester, where he married the widow of a citizen and opened a shop, without asking the permission of the mayor, who with the officers of justice came and seized all his goods, which, according to his own account, filled nine sacks, and then drove him out of the town. The bard in a great fury indited an awdl, in which he invites Reinallt ap Grufydd ap Bleddyn, a kind of predatory chieftain, who resided a little way off in Flintshire, to come and set the town on fire, and slaughter the inhabitants, in revenge for the wrongs he had suffered, and then proceeds to vent all kinds

of imprecations against the mayor and people of Chester, wishing, amongst other things, that they might soon hear that the Dee had become too shallow to bear their ships—that a certain cutaneous disorder might attack the wrists of great and small, old and young, laity and clergy —that grass might grow in their streets—that Ilar and Cyveilach, Welsh saints, might slay them—that dogs might snarl at them—and that the king of heaven, with the saints Brynach and Non, might afflict them with blindness—which piece, however ineffectual in inducing God and the saints to visit the Chester people with the curses with which the furious bard wished them to be afflicted, seems to have produced somewhat of its intended effect on the chieftain, who shortly afterwards, on learning that the mayor and many of the Chester people were present at the fair of Mold, near which place he resided, set upon them at the head of his forces, and after a desperate combat, in which many lives were lost, took the mayor prisoner, and drove those of his people who survived into a tower, which he set on fire and burnt, with all the unhappy wretches which it contained, completing the horrors of the day by hanging the unfortunate mayor.

Conversant as I was with all this strange history, is it wonderful that I looked with great interest from the wall of Chester in the direction of Mold ?

Once did I make the compass of the city upon the walls, and was beginning to do the same a

second time, when I stumbled against a black, who, with his arms leaning upon the wall, was spitting over it, in the direction of the river. I apologized, and contrived to enter into conversation with him. He was tolerably well dressed, had a hairy cap on his head, was about forty years of age, and brutishly ugly, his features scarcely resembling those of a human being. He told me he was a native of Antigua, a blacksmith by trade, and had been a slave. I asked him if he could speak any language besides English, and received for answer that besides English, he could speak Spanish and French. Forthwith I spoke to him in Spanish, but he did not understand me. I then asked him to speak to me in Spanish, but he could not. 'Surely you can tell me the word for water in Spanish,' said I; he, however, was not able. 'How is it,' said I, 'that, pretending to be acquainted with Spanish, you do not even know the word for water?' He said he could not tell, but supposed that he had forgotten the Spanish language, adding, however, that he could speak French perfectly. I spoke to him in French—he did not understand me: I told him to speak to me in French, but he did not. I then asked him the word for bread in French, but he could not tell me. I made no observations on his ignorance, but inquired how he liked being a slave? He said not at all; that it was very bad to be a slave, as a slave was forced to work. I asked him if he did not work now that he was free? He said very seldom; that he did not

like work, and that it did not agree with him. I asked how he came into England, and he said that, wishing to see England, he had come over with a gentleman as his servant, but that as soon as he got there, he had left his master, as he did not like work. I asked him how he contrived to live in England without working. He said that any black might live in England without working; that all he had to do was to attend religious meetings, and speak against slavery and the Americans. I asked him if he had done so. He said he had, and that the religious people were very kind to him, and gave him money, and that a religious lady was going to marry him. I asked him if he knew anything about the Americans. He said he did, and that they were very bad people, who kept slaves and flogged them. 'And quite right too,' said I, 'if they are lazy rascals like yourself, who want to eat without working. What a pretty set of knaves or fools must they be, who encourage a fellow like you to speak against negro slavery, of the necessity for which you yourself are a living instance, and against a people of whom you know as much as of French or Spanish.' Then leaving the black, who made no other answer to what I said, than by spitting with considerable force in the direction of the river, I continued making my second compass of the city upon the wall.

Having walked round the city for the second time, I returned to the inn. In the evening I went out again, passed over the bridge, and then

turned to the right in the direction of the hills. Near the river, on my right, on a kind of green, I observed two or three tents resembling those of gypsies. Some ragged children were playing near them, who, however, had nothing of the appearance of the children of the Egyptian race, their locks being not dark, but either of a flaxen or red hue, and their features not delicate and regular, but coarse and uncouth, and their complexions not olive, but rather inclining to be fair. I did not go up to them, but continued my course till I arrived near a large factory. I then turned and retraced my steps into the town. It was Saturday night, and the streets were crowded with people, many of whom must have been Welsh, as I heard the Cambrian language spoken on every side.

CHAPTER IV

Sunday Morning—Tares and Wheat—Teetotalism—Hearsay—Irish Family—What Profession ?—Sabbath Evening—Priest or Minister—Give us God.

On the Sunday morning, as we sat at breakfast, we heard the noise of singing in the street; running to the window, we saw a number of people, bareheaded, from whose mouths the singing or psalmody proceeded. These, on inquiry, we were informed, were Methodists, going about to raise recruits for a grand camp-meeting, which was to be held a little way out of the town. We finished our breakfast, and at eleven attended divine service at the Cathedral. The interior of this holy edifice was smooth and neat, strangely contrasting with its exterior, which was rough and weather-beaten. We had decent places found us by a civil verger, who probably took us for what we were—decent country people. We heard much fine chanting by the choir, and an admirable sermon, preached by a venerable Prebend, on 'Tares and Wheat.' The congregation was numerous and attentive. After service, we returned to our inn, and at two o'clock dined. During dinner, our conversation ran almost entirely on the sermon, which we all agreed was one of the best sermons we had ever heard, and most singularly adapted to country people like ourselves, being on 'Wheat and

Tares.' When dinner was over, my wife and daughter repaired to a neighbouring church, and I went in quest of the camp-meeting, having a mighty desire to know what kind of a thing Methodism at Chester was.

I found about two thousand people gathered together in a field near the railroad station; a waggon stood under some green elms at one end of the field, in which were ten or a dozen men with the look of Methodist preachers; one of these was holding forth to the multitude when I arrived, but he presently sat down, I having, as I suppose, only come in time to hear the fag-end of his sermon. Another succeeded him, who, after speaking for about half an hour, was succeeded by another. All the discourses were vulgar and fanatical, and in some instances unintelligible, at least to my ears. There was plenty of vociferation, but not one single burst of eloquence. Some of the assembly appeared to take considerable interest in what was said, and every now and then showed they did by devout hums and groans; but the generality evidently took little or none, staring about listlessly, or talking to one another. Sometimes, when anything particularly low escaped from the mouth of the speaker, I heard exclamations of 'how low! well, I think I could preach better than that,' and the like. At length a man of about fifty, pock-broken and somewhat bald, began to speak: unlike the others who screamed, shouted, and seemed in earnest, he spoke in a dry, waggish style, which had all the coarseness

and nothing of the cleverness of that of old Rowland Hill, whom I once heard. After a great many jokes, some of them very poor, and others exceedingly threadbare, on the folly of those who sell themselves to the Devil for a little temporary enjoyment, he introduced the subject of drunkenness, or rather drinking fermented liquors, which he seemed to consider the same thing; and many a sorry joke on the folly of drinking them did he crack, which some half-dozen amidst the concourse applauded. At length he said :—

'After all, brethren, such drinking is no joking matter, for it is the root of all evil. Now, brethren, if you would all get to heaven, and cheat the enemy of your souls, never go into a public-house to drink, and never fetch any drink from a public-house. Let nothing pass your lips, in the shape of drink, stronger than water or tea. Brethren, if you would cheat the Devil, take the pledge and become teetotallers. I am a teetotaller myself, thank God—though once I was a regular lushington.'

Here ensued a burst of laughter in which I joined, though not at the wretched joke, but at the absurdity of the argument; for, according to that argument, I thought my old friends the Spaniards and Portuguese must be the most moral people in the world, being almost all water-drinkers. As the speaker was proceeding with his nonsense, I heard some one say behind me—'a pretty fellow that, to speak against drinking and public-houses: he pretends to be

reformed, but he is still as fond of the lush as ever. It was only the other day I saw him reeling out of a gin-shop.'

Now that speech I did not like, for I saw at once that it could not be true, so I turned quickly round and said—

'Old chap, I can scarcely credit that!'

The man whom I addressed, a rough-and-ready-looking fellow of the lower class, seemed half disposed to return me a savage answer; but an Englishman of the lower class, though you call his word in question, is never savage with you, provided you call him old chap, and he considers you by your dress to be his superior in station. Now I, who had called the word of this man in question, had called him old chap, and was considerably better dressed than himself; so, after a little hesitation, he became quite gentle, and someting more, for he said in a half-apologetic tone—'Well, sir, I did not exactly see him myself, but a particular friend of mine heer'd a man say, that he heer'd another man say, that he was told that a man heer'd that that fellow——'

'Come, come!' said I, 'a man must not be convicted on evidence like that; no man has more contempt for the doctrine which that man endeavours to inculcate than myself, for I consider it to have been got up partly for fanatical, partly for political purposes; but I will never believe that he was lately seen coming out of a gin-shop; he is too wise, or rather too cunning, for that.'

I stayed listening to these people till evening was at hand. I then left them, and without returning to the inn strolled over the bridge to the green, where the tents stood. I went up to them: two women sat at the entrance of one; a man stood by them, and the children, whom I had before seen, were gambolling near at hand. One of the women was about forty, the other some twenty years younger; both were ugly. The younger was a rude, stupid-looking creature, with red cheeks and redder hair, but there was a dash of intelligence and likewise of wildness in the countenance of the elder female, whose complexion and hair were rather dark. The man was about the same age as the elder woman; he had rather a sharp look, and was dressed in hat, white frock-coat, corduroy breeches, long stockings and shoes. I gave them the seal of the evening.

'Good evening to your haner,' said the man—'Good evening to you, sir,' said the woman; whilst the younger mumbled something, probably to the same effect, but which I did not catch.

'Fine weather,' said I.

'Very, sir,' said the elder female. 'Won't you please to sit down?' and reaching back into the tent, she pulled out a stool which she placed near me.

I sat down on the stool. 'You are not from these parts?' said I, addressing myself to the man.

'We are not, your haner,' said the man; 'we are from Ireland.'

'And this lady,' said I, motioning with my head to the elder female, 'is, I suppose, your wife?'

'She is, your haner, and the children which your haner sees are my children.'

'And who is this young lady?' said I, motioning to the uncouth-looking girl.

'The young lady, as your haner is pleased to call her, is a daughter of a sister of mine who is now dead, along with her husband. We have her with us, your haner, because if we did not she would be alone in the world.'

'And what trade or profession do you follow?' said I.

'We do a bit in the tinkering line, your haner.'

'Do you find tinkering a very profitable profession?' said I.

'Not very, your haner; but we contrive to get a crust and a drink by it.'

'That 's more than I ever could,' said I.

'Has your haner then ever followed tinkering?' said the man.

'Yes,' said I, 'but I soon left off.'

'And became a minister,' said the elder female. 'Well, your honour is not the first indifferent tinker that 's turn'd out a shining minister.'

'Why do you think me a minister?'

'Because your honour has the very look and voice of one. Oh, it was kind in your honour to come to us here in the Sabbath evening, in order that you might bring us God.'

'What do you mean by bringing you God?' said I.

'Talking to us about good things, sir, and instructing us out of the Holy Book.'

'I am no minister,' said I.

'Then you are a priest; I am sure you are either a minister or a priest; and now that I look on you, sir, I think you look more like a priest than a minister. Yes, I see you are a priest. Oh, your Reverence, give us God! pull out the crucifix from your bosom, and let us kiss the face of God!'

'Of what religion are you?' said I.

'Catholics, your Reverence, Catholics are we all.'

'I am no priest.'

'Then you are a minister; I am sure you are either a priest or a minister. O sir, pull out the Holy Book, and instruct us from it this blessed Sabbath evening. Give us God, sir, give us God!'

'And would you, who are Catholics, listen to the voice of a minister?'

'That would we, sir; at least I would. If you are a minister, and a good minister, I would as soon listen to your words as those of Father Toban himself.'

'And who is Father Toban?'

'A powerful priest in these parts, sir, who has more than once eased me of my sins, and given me God upon the cross. Oh, a powerful and comfortable priest is Father Toban.'

'And what would he say if he were to know that you asked for God from a minister?'

'I do not know, and do not much care; if

I get God, I do not care whether I get Him from a minister or a priest; both have Him, no doubt, only give Him in different ways. O sir, do give us God; we need Him, sir, for we are sinful people; we call ourselves tinkers, but many is the sinful thing——'

'Bi-do-hosd,' said the man: Irish words tantamount to 'Be silent!'

'I will not be hushed,' said the woman, speaking English. 'The man is a good man, and he will do us no harm. We are tinkers, sir; but we do many things besides tinkering, many sinful things, especially in Wales, whither we are soon going again. Oh, I want to be eased of some of my sins before I go into Wales again, and so do you, Tourlough, for you know how you are sometimes haunted by devils at night in those dreary Welsh hills. O sir, give us comfort in some shape or other, either as priest or minister; give us God! Give us God!'

'I am neither priest nor minister,' said I, 'and can only say: Lord have mercy upon you!' Then getting up I flung the children some money and departed.

'We do not want your money, sir,' screamed the woman after me; 'we have plenty of money. Give us God! Give us God!'

'Yes, your haner,' said the man, 'give us God! we do not want money'; and the uncouth girl said something, which sounded much like Give us God! but I hastened across the meadow, which was now quite dusky, and was presently in the inn with my wife and daughter.

CHAPTER V

Welsh Book-stall—Wit and Poetry—Welsh of Chester—Beautiful Morning—Noble Fellow—The Coiling Serpent—Wrexham Church—Welsh or English ?—Codiad yr Ehedydd.

On the afternoon of Monday I sent my family off by the train to Llangollen, which place we had determined to make our head-quarters during our stay in Wales. I intended to follow them next day, not in train, but on foot, as by walking I should be better able to see the country, between Chester and Llangollen, than by making the journey by the flying vehicle. As I returned to the inn from the train I took refuge from a shower in one of the rows or covered streets, to which, as I have already said, one ascends by flights of steps; stopping at a book-stall I took up a book which chanced to be a Welsh one. The proprietor, a short red-faced man, observing me reading the book, asked me if I could understand it. I told him that I could.

'If so,' said he, 'let me hear you translate the two lines on the title-page.'

'Are you a Welshman ?' said I.

'I am!' he replied.

'Good!' said I, and I translated into English the two lines which were a couplet by Edmund Price, an old archdeacon of Merion, celebrated in his day for wit and poetry.

The man then asked me from what part of Wales I came, and when I told him that I was an Englishman, was evidently offended, either because he did not believe me, or, as I more incline to think, did not approve of an Englishman's understanding Welsh.

The book was the life of the Rev. Richards, and was published at Caer-lleon, or the city of the legion, the appropriate ancient British name for the place now called Chester, a legion having been kept stationed there during the occupation of Britain by the Romans.

I returned to the inn and dined, and then yearning for society, descended into the kitchen and had some conversation with the Welsh maid. She told me that there were a great many Welsh in Chester from all parts of Wales, but chiefly from Denbighshire and Flintshire, which latter was her own county. That a great many children were born in Chester of Welsh parents, and brought up in the fear of God and love of the Welsh tongue. That there were some who had never been in Wales, who spoke as good Welsh as herself, or better. That the Welsh of Chester were of various religious persuasions; that some were Baptists, some Independents, but that the greater part were Calvinistic Methodists; that she herself was a Calvinistic Methodist; that the different persuasions had their different chapels, in which God was prayed to in Welsh; that there were very few Welsh in Chester who belonged to the Church of England, and that the Welsh in general do not like Church

of England worship, as I should soon find if I went into Wales.

Late in the evening I directed my steps across the bridge to the green, where I had discoursed with the Irish itinerants. I wished to have some more conversation with them respecting their way of life, and, likewise, as they had so strongly desired it, to give them a little Christian comfort, for my conscience reproached me for my abrupt departure on the preceding evening. On arriving at the green, however, I found them gone, and no traces of them but the mark of their fire and a little dirty straw. I returned, disappointed and vexed, to my inn.

Early the next morning I departed from Chester for Llangollen, distant about twenty miles; I passed over the noble bridge and proceeded along a broad and excellent road, leading in a direction almost due south through pleasant meadows. I felt very happy—and no wonder; the morning was beautiful, the birds sang merrily, and a sweet smell proceeded from the new-cut hay in the fields, and I was bound for Wales. I passed over the river Allan and through two villages called, as I was told, Pulford and Marford, and ascended a hill; from the top of this hill the view is very fine. To the east are the high lands of Cheshire, to the west the bold hills of Wales, and below, on all sides a fair variety of wood and water, green meads and arable fields.

'You may well look around, Measter,' said a waggoner, who, coming from the direction in which I was bound, stopped to breathe his team

on the top of the hill; 'you may well look around—there isn't such a place to see the country from, far and near, as where we stand. Many come to this place to look about them.'

I looked at the man, and thought I had never seen a more powerful-looking fellow; he was about six feet two inches high, immensely broad in the shoulders, and could hardly have weighed less than sixteen stone. I gave him the seal of the morning, and asked whether he was Welsh or English.

'English, Measter, English; born t' other side of Beeston, pure Cheshire, Measter.'

'I suppose,' said I, 'there are few Welshmen such big fellows as yourself.'

'No, Measter,' said the fellow, with a grin, 'there are few Welshmen so big as I, or yourself either; they are small men mostly, Measter, them Welshers, very small men—and yet the fellows can use their hands. I am a bit of a fighter, Measter, at least I was before my wife made me join the Methodist connection, and I once fit with a Welshman at Wrexham, he came from the hills, and was a real Welshman, and shorter than myself by a whole head and shoulder, but he stood up against me, and gave me more than play for my money, till I gripped him, flung him down and myself upon him, and then of course 'twas all over with him.'

'You are a noble fellow,' said I, 'and a credit to Cheshire. Will you have sixpence to drink?'

'Thank you, Measter, I shall stop at Pulford,

and shall be glad to drink your health in a jug of ale.'

I gave him sixpence, and descended the hill on one side, while he, with his team, descended it on the other.

'A genuine Saxon,' said I; 'I daresay just like many of those who, under Hengist, subdued the plains of Lloegr and Britain. Taliesin called the Saxon race the Coiling Serpent. He had better have called it the Big Bull. He was a noble poet, however: what wonderful lines, upon the whole, are those in his prophecy, in which he speaks of the Saxons and Britons, and of the result of their struggle—

'A serpent which coils,
And with fury boils,
From Germany coming with arm'd wings spread,
Shall subdue and shall enthrall
The broad Britain all,
From the Lochlin ocean to Severn's bed.

'And British men
Shall be captives then
To strangers from Saxonia's strand;
They shall praise their God, and hold
Their language as of old,
But except wild Wales they shall lose their land.'

I arrived at Wrexham, and having taken a very hearty breakfast at the principal inn, for I felt rather hungry after a morning's walk of ten miles, I walked about the town. The town is reckoned a Welsh town, but its appearance is not Welsh—its inhabitants have neither the look nor language of Welshmen, and its name shows

that it was founded by some Saxon adventurer, Wrexham being a Saxon compound, signifying the home or habitation of Rex or Rag, and identical, or nearly so, with the Wroxham of East Anglia. It is a stirring bustling place, of much traffic, and of several thousand inhabitants. Its most remarkable object is its church, which stands at the south-western side. To this church, after wandering for some time about the streets, I repaired. The tower is quadrangular, and is at least one hundred feet high; it has on its summit four little turrets, one at each corner, between each of which are three spirelets, the middlemost of the three the highest. The nave of the church is to the east; it is of two stories, both crenellated at the top. I wished to see the interior of the church, but found the gate locked. Observing a group of idlers close at hand with their backs against a wall, I went up to them and, addressing myself to one, inquired whether I could see the church. 'O yes, sir,' said the man; 'the clerk who has the key lives close at hand; one of us shall go and fetch him; by the bye, I may as well go myself.' He moved slowly away. He was a large bulky man of about the middle age, and his companions were about the same age and size as himself. I asked them if they were Welsh. 'Yes, sir,' said one, 'I suppose we are, for they call us Welsh.' I asked if any of them could speak Welsh. 'No, sir,' said the man, 'all the Welsh that any of us know, or indeed wish to know, is Cwrw da.' Here there was a general laugh. Cwrw da

signifies good ale. I at first thought that the words might be intended as a hint for a treat, but was soon convinced of the contrary. There was no greedy expectation in his eyes, nor, indeed, in those of his companions, though they all looked as if they were fond of good ale. I inquired whether much Welsh was spoken in the town, and was told very little. When the man returned with the clerk I thanked him. He told me I was welcome, and then went and leaned with his back against the wall. He and his mates were probably a set of boon companions enjoying the air after a night's bout at drinking. I was subsequently told that all the people of Wrexham are fond of good ale. The clerk unlocked the church door, and conducted me in. The interior was modern, but in no respects remarkable. The clerk informed me that there was a Welsh service every Sunday afternoon in the church, but that few people attended, and those few were almost entirely from the country He said that neither he nor the clergyman were natives of Wrexham. He showed me the Welsh Church Bible, and at my request read a few verses from the sacred volume. He seemed a highly-intelligent man. I gave him something, which appeared to be more than he expected, and departed, after inquiring of him the road to Llangollen.

I crossed a bridge, for there is a bridge and a stream too at Wrexham. The road at first bore due west, but speedily took a southerly direction. I moved rapidly over an undulating

country; a region of hills, or rather of mountains lay on my right hand. At the entrance of a small village a poor, sickly-looking woman asked me for charity.

'Are you Welsh or English?' said I.

'Welsh,' she replied; 'but I speak both languages, as do all the people here.'

I gave her a halfpenny; she wished me luck, and I proceeded. I passed some huge black buildings which a man told me were collieries, and several carts laden with coal, and soon came to Rhiwabon—a large village about half way between Wrexham and Llangollen. I observed in this place nothing remarkable but an ancient church. My way from hence lay nearly west. I ascended a hill, from the top of which I looked down into a smoky valley. I descended, passing by a great many collieries, in which I observed grimy men working amidst smoke and flame. At the bottom of the hill near a bridge I turned round. A ridge to the east particularly struck my attention; it was covered with dusky edifices, from which proceeded thundering sounds and puffs of smoke. A woman passed me going towards Rhiwabon; I pointed to the ridge and asked its name; I spoke English. The woman shook her head and replied 'Dim Saesneg.'

'This is as it should be,' said I to myself; 'I now feel I am in Wales.' I repeated the question in Welsh.

'Cefn Bach,' she replied—which signifies the little ridge.

'Diolch iti,' I replied, and proceeded on my way.

I was now in a wide valley—enormous hills were on my right. The road was good, and above it, in the side of a steep bank, was a causeway intended for foot passengers. It was overhung with hazel bushes. I walked along it to its termination which was at Llangollen. I found my wife and daughter at the principal inn. They had already taken a house. We dined together at the inn; during the dinner we had music, for a Welsh harper stationed in the passage played upon his instrument 'Codiad yr ehedydd.' 'Of a surety,' said I, 'I am in Wales!'

CHAPTER VI

Llangollen—Wyn Ab Nudd—The Dee—Dinas Bran.

THE northern side of the vale of Llangollen is formed by certain enormous rocks called the Eglwysig rocks, which extend from east to west, a distance of about two miles. The southern side is formed by the Berwyn hills. The valley is intersected by the river Dee, the origin of which is a deep lake near Bala, about twenty miles to the west. Between the Dee and the Eglwysig rises a lofty hill, on the top of which are the ruins of Dinas Bran, which bear no slight resemblance to a crown. The upper part of the hill is bare with the exception of what is covered by the ruins; on the lower part there are inclosures and trees, with, here and there, a grove or farm-house. On the other side of the valley, to the east of Llangollen, is a hill called Pen y Coed, beautifully covered with trees of various kinds; it stands between the river and the Berwyn, even as the hill of Dinas Bran stands between the river and the Eglwysig rocks—it does not, however, confront Dinas Bran, which stands more to the west.

Llangollen is a small town or large village of white houses with slate roofs, it contains about two thousand inhabitants, and is situated principally on the southern side of the Dee. At its

western end it has an ancient bridge and a modest unpretending church nearly in its centre, in the chancel of which rest the mortal remains of an old bard called Gryffydd Hiraethog. From some of the houses on the southern side there is a noble view—Dinas Bran and its mighty hill forming the principal objects. The view from the northern part of the town, which is indeed little more than a suburb, is not quite so grand, but is nevertheless highly interesting. The eastern entrance of the vale of Llangollen is much wider than the western, which is overhung by bulky hills. There are many pleasant villas on both sides of the river, some of which stand a considerable way up the hills; of the villas the most noted is Plas Newydd at the foot of the Berwyn, built by two Irish ladies of high rank, who resided in it for nearly half a century, and were celebrated throughout Europe by the name of the Ladies of Llangollen.

The view of the hill of Dinas Bran, from the southern side of Llangollen, would be much more complete were it not for a bulky excrescence, towards its base, which prevents the gazer from obtaining a complete view. The name of Llangollen signifies the church of Collen, and the vale and village take their name from the church, which was originally dedicated to Saint Collen, though some, especially the neighbouring peasantry, suppose that Llangollen is a compound of Llan, a church, and Collen, a hazel-wood, and that the church was called the church of the hazel-wood from the number of hazels in

the neighbourhood. Collen, according to a legendary life, which exists of him in Welsh, was a Briton by birth, and of illustrious ancestry. He served for some time abroad as a soldier against Julian the Apostate, and slew a Pagan champion who challenged the best man amongst the Christians. Returning to his own country he devoted himself to religion, and became Abbot of Glastonbury, but subsequently retired to a cave on the side of a mountain, where he lived a life of great austerity. Once as he was lying in his cell he heard two men out abroad discoursing about Wyn Ab Nudd, and saying that he was king of the Tylwyth Teg or Fairies, and lord of Unknown, whereupon Collen thrusting his head out of his cave told them to hold their tongues, for that Wyn Ab Nudd and his host were merely devils. At dead of night he heard a knocking at the door, and on his asking who was there, a voice said: 'I am a messenger from Wyn Ab Nudd, king of Unknown, and I am come to summon thee to appear before my master to-morrow, at mid-day, on the top of the hill.'

Collen did not go—the next night there was the same knocking and the same message. Still Collen did not go. The third night the messenger came again and repeated his summons, adding that if he did not go it would be the worse for him. The next day Collen made some holy water, put it into a pitcher and repaired to the top of the hill, where he saw a wonderfully fine castle, attendants in magnificent liveries, youths

and damsels dancing with nimble feet, and a man of honorable presence before the gate, who told him that the king was expecting him to dinner. Collen followed the man into the castle, and beheld the king on a throne of gold, and a table magnificently spread before him. The king welcomed Collen, and begged him to taste of the dainties on the table, adding that he hoped that in future he would reside with him. 'I will not eat of the leaves of the forest,' said Collen.

'Did you ever see men better dressed?' said the king, 'than my attendants here in red and blue?'

'Their dress is good enough,' said Collen, 'considering what kind of dress it is.'

'What kind of dress is it?' said the king.

Collen replied: 'The red on the one side denotes burning, and the blue on the other side denotes freezing.' Then, drawing forth his sprinkler, he flung the holy water in the faces of the king and his people, whereupon the whole vision disappeared, so that there was neither castle nor attendants, nor youth nor damsel, nor musician with his music, nor banquet, nor anything to be seen save the green bushes.

The valley of the Dee, of which the Llangollen district forms part, is called in the British tongue Glyndyfrdwy—that is, the valley of the Dwy or Dee. The celebrated Welsh chieftain, generally known as Owen Glendower, was surnamed after this valley, the whole of which belonged to him, and in which he had two or three places of strength,

though his general abode was a castle in Sycharth, a valley to the south-east of the Berwyn, and distant about twelve miles from Llangollen.

Connected with the Dee there is a wonderful Druidical legend to the following effect. The Dee springs from two fountains, high up in Merionethshire, called Dwy Fawr and Dwy Fach, or the great and little Dwy, whose waters pass through those of the lake of Bala without mingling with them, and come out at its northern extremity. These fountains had their names from two individuals, Dwy Fawr and Dwy Fach, who escaped from the Deluge, when all the rest of the human race were drowned, and the passing of the waters of the two fountains through the lake, without being confounded with its flood, is emblematic of the salvation of the two individuals from the Deluge, of which the lake is a type.

Dinas Bran, which crowns the top of the mighty hill on the northern side of the valley, is a ruined stronghold of unknown antiquity. The name is generally supposed to signify Crow Castle, bran being the British word for crow, and flocks of crows being frequently seen hovering over it. It may, however, mean the castle of Bran or Brennus, or the castle above the Bran, a brook which flows at its foot.

Dinas Bran was a place quite impregnable in the old time, and served as a retreat to Gruffydd, son of Madawg, from the rage of his countrymen, who were incensed against him because, having married Emma, the daughter of James Lord

Audley, he had, at the instigation of his wife and father-in-law, sided with Edward the First against his own native sovereign. But though it could shield him from his foes, it could not preserve him from remorse and the stings of conscience, of which he speedily died.

At present the place consists only of a few ruined walls, and probably consisted of little more two or three hundred years ago: Roger Cyffyn, a Welsh bard who flourished at the beginning of the seventeenth century, wrote an englyn upon it, of which the following is a translation :—

Gone, gone are thy gates, Dinas Bran on the height!
Thy warders are blood-crows and ravens, I trow;
Now no one will wend from the field of the fight
To the fortress on high, save the raven and crow.

CHAPTER VII

Poor Black Cat—Dissenters—Persecution—What Impudence!

THE house or cottage, for it was called a cottage though it consisted of two stories, in which my wife had procured lodgings for us, was situated in the Northern suburb. Its front was towards a large perllan or orchard, which sloped down gently to the banks of the Dee; its back was towards the road leading from Wrexham, behind which was a high bank, on the top of which was a canal called in Welsh the Camlas, whose commencement was up the valley about two miles west. A little way up the road, towards Wrexham, was the vicarage and a little way down was a flannel factory, beyond which was a small inn, with pleasure grounds, kept by an individual who had once been a gentleman's servant. The mistress of the house was a highly respectable widow, who with a servant maid was to wait upon us. It was as agreeable a place in all respects as people like ourselves could desire.

As I and my family sat at tea in our parlour, an hour or two after we had taken possession of our lodgings, the door of the room and that of the entrance to the house being open, on account of the fineness of the weather, a poor black cat

entered hastily, sat down on the carpet by the table, looked up towards us, and mewed piteously. I never had seen so wretched a looking creature. It was dreadfully attenuated, being little more than skin and bone, and was sorely afflicted with an eruptive malady. And here I may as well relate the history of this cat previous to our arrival which I subsequently learned by bits and snatches. It had belonged to a previous vicar of Llangollen, and had been left behind at his departure. His successor brought with him dogs and cats, who, conceiving that the late vicar's cat had no business at the vicarage, drove it forth to seek another home, which, however, it could not find. Almost all the people of the suburb were dissenters, as indeed were the generality of the people of Llangollen, and knowing the cat to be a church cat, not only would not harbour it, but did all they could to make it miserable; whilst the few who were not dissenters, would not receive it into their houses, either because they had cats of their own, or dogs, or did not want a cat, so that the cat had no home and was dreadfully persecuted by nine-tenths of the suburb. O, there never was a cat so persecuted as that poor Church of England animal, and solely on account of the opinions which it was supposed to have imbibed in the house of its late master, for I never could learn that the dissenters of the suburb, nor indeed of Llangollen in general, were in the habit of persecuting other cats; the cat was a Church of England cat, and that was enough: stone it,

hang it, drown it! were the cries of almost everybody. If the workmen of the flannel factory, all of whom were Calvinistic Methodists, chanced to get a glimpse of it in the road from the windows of the building, they would sally forth in a body, and with sticks, stones, or for want of other weapons, with clots of horse-dung, of which there was always plenty on the road, would chase it up the high bank or perhaps over the Camlas—the inhabitants of a small street between our house and the factory leading from the road to the river, all of whom were dissenters, if they saw it moving about the perllan, into which their back windows looked, would shriek and hoot at it, and fling anything of no value, which came easily to hand, at the head or body of the ecclesiastical cat. The good woman of the house, who, though a very excellent person, was a bitter dissenter, whenever she saw it upon her ground or heard it was there, would make after it, frequently attended by her maid Margaret, and her young son, a boy about nine years of age, both of whom hated the cat, and were always ready to attack it, either alone or in company, and no wonder, the maid being not only a dissenter, but a class teacher, and the boy not only a dissenter, but intended for the dissenting ministry. Where it got its food, and food it sometimes must have got, for even a cat, an animal known to have nine lives, cannot live without food, was only known to itself, as was the place where it lay, for even a cat must lie down sometimes; though a labouring man who

occasionally dug in the garden told me he believed that in the springtime it ate freshets, and the woman of the house once said that she believed it sometimes slept in the hedge, which hedge, by the bye, divided our perllan from the vicarage grounds, which were very extensive. Well might the cat after having led this kind of life for better than two years look mere skin and bone when it made its appearance in our apartment, and have an eruptive malady, and also a bronchitic cough, for I remember it had both. How it came to make its appearance there is a mystery, for it had never entered the house before, even when there were lodgers; that it should not visit the woman, who was its declared enemy, was natural enough, but why if it did not visit her other lodgers, did it visit us? Did instinct keep it aloof from them? Did instinct draw it towards us? We gave it some bread-and-butter, and a little tea with milk and sugar. It ate and drank and soon began to purr. The good woman of the house was horrified when on coming in to remove the things she saw the church cat on her carpet. 'What impudence!' she exclaimed, and made towards it, but on our telling her that we did not expect that it should be disturbed, she let it alone. A very remarkable circumstance was, that though the cat had hitherto been in the habit of flying not only from her face, but the very echo of her voice, it now looked her in the face with perfect composure, as much as to say, 'I don't fear you, for I know that I am now safe and with my own

people.' It stayed with us two hours and then went away. The next morning it returned. To be short, though it went away every night, it became our own cat, and one of our family. I gave it something which cured it of its eruption, and through good treatment it soon lost its other ailments and began to look sleek and bonny.

CHAPTER VIII

The Mowers—Deep Welsh—Extensive View—Old Celtic Hatred—Fish-preserving—Smollett's Morgan.

NEXT morning I set out to ascend Dinas Bran, a number of children, almost entirely girls, followed me. I asked them why they came after me. 'In the hope that you will give us something,' said one in very good English. I told them that I should give them nothing, but they still followed me. A little way up the hill I saw some men cutting hay. I made an observation to one of them respecting the fineness of the weather; he answered civilly, and rested on his scythe, whilst the others pursued their work. I asked him whether he was a farming man; he told me that he was not; that he generally worked at the flannel manufactory, but that for some days past he had not been employed there, work being slack, and had on that account joined the mowers in order to earn a few shillings. I asked him how it was he knew how to handle a scythe, not being bred up a farming man; he smiled, and said that, somehow or other, he had learnt to do so.

'You speak very good English,' said I, 'have you much Welsh?'

'Plenty,' said he; 'I am a real Welshman.'

'Can you read Welsh?' said I.

'O yes!' he replied.

'What books have you read?' said I.

'I have read the Bible, sir, and one or two other books.'

'Did you ever read the Bardd Cwsg?' said I.

He looked at me with some surprise. 'No,' said he, after a moment or two, 'I have never read it. I have seen it, but it was far too deep Welsh for me.'

'I have read it,' said I.

'Are you a Welshman?' said he.

'No,' said I; 'I am an Englishman.'

'And how is it,' said he, 'that you can read Welsh without being a Welshman?'

'I learned to do so,' said I, 'even as you learned to mow, without being bred up to farming work.'

'Ah!' said he, 'but it is easier to learn to mow than to read the Bardd Cwsg.'

'I don't know that,' said I; 'I have taken up a scythe a hundred times, but I cannot mow.'

'Will your honour take mine now, and try again?' said he.

'No,' said I, 'for if I take your scythe in hand I must give you a shilling, you know, by mowers' law.'

He gave a broad grin, and I proceeded up the hill. When he rejoined his companions he said something to them in Welsh, at which they all laughed. I reached the top of the hill, the children still attending me.

The view over the vale is very beautiful; but on no side, except in the direction of the west, is it very extensive; Dinas Bran being on all

other sides overtopped by other hills: in that direction, indeed, the view is extensive enough, reaching on a fine day even to the Wyddfa or peak of Snowdon, a distance of sixty miles, at least as some say, who perhaps ought to add to very good eyes, which mine are not. The day that I made my first ascent of Dinas Bran was very clear, but I do not think I saw the Wyddfa then from the top of Dinas Bran. It is true I might see it without knowing it, being utterly unacquainted with it, except by name; but I repeat I do not think I saw it, and I am quite sure that I did not see it from the top of Dinas Bran on a subsequent ascent, on a day equally clear, when if I had seen the Wyddfa I must have recognized it, having been at its top. As I stood gazing around, the children danced about upon the grass, and sang a song. The song was English. I descended the hill; they followed me to its foot, and then left me. The children of the lower class of Llangollen are great pests to visitors. The best way to get rid of them is to give them nothing: I followed that plan, and was not long troubled with them.

Arrived at the foot of the hill, I walked along the bank of the canal to the west. Presently I came to a barge lying by the bank; the boatman was in it. I entered into conversation with him. He told me that the canal and its branches extended over a great part of England. That the boats carried slates—that he had frequently gone as far as Paddington by the canal—that he was generally three weeks on the journey—that

the boatmen and their families lived in the little cabins aft—that the boatmen were all Welsh—that they could read English, but little or no Welsh—that English was a much more easy language to read than Welsh—that they passed by many towns, among others Northampton, and that he liked no place so much as Llangollen. I proceeded till I came to a place where some people were putting huge slates into a canal boat. It was near a bridge which crossed the Dee, which was on the left. I stopped and entered into conversation with one, who appeared to be the principal man. He told me amongst other things that he was a blacksmith from the neighbourhood of Rhiwabon, and that the flags were intended for the flooring of his premises. In the boat was an old bareheaded, bare-armed fellow, who presently joined in the conversation in very broken English. He told me that his name was Joseph Hughes, and that he was a real Welshman and was proud of being so; he expressed a great dislike for the English, who, he said, were in the habit of making fun of him and ridiculing his language; he said that all the fools that he had known were Englishmen. I told him that all Englishmen were not fools; 'but the greater part are,' said he. 'Look how they work,' said I. 'Yes,' said he, 'some of them are good at breaking stones for the road, but not more than one in a hundred.' 'There seems to be something of the old Celtic hatred to the Saxon in this old fellow,' said I to myself, as I walked away.

I proceeded till I came to the head of the canal, where the navigation first commences. It is close to a weir, over which the Dee falls. Here there is a little floodgate, through which water rushes from an oblong pond or reservoir, fed by water from a corner of the upper part of the weir. On the left, or south-west side, is a mound of earth fenced with stones which is the commencement of the bank of the canal. The pond or reservoir above the floodgate is separated from the weir by a stone wall on the left, or south-west side. This pond has two floodgates, the one already mentioned, which opens into the canal, and another, on the other side of the stone mound, opening to the lower part of the weir. Whenever, as a man told me who was standing near, it is necessary to lay the bed of the canal dry, in the immediate neighbourhood for the purpose of making repairs, the floodgate to the canal is closed, and the one to the lower part of the weir is opened, and then the water from the pond flows into the Dee, whilst a sluice, near the first lock, lets out the water of the canal into the river. The head of the canal is situated in a very beautiful spot. To the left or south is a lofty hill covered with wood. To the right is a beautiful slope or lawn on the top of which is a pretty villa, to which you can get by a little wooden bridge over the floodgate of the canal, and indeed forming part of it. Few things are so beautiful in their origin as this canal, which, be it known, with its locks and its aqueducts, the grandest of which last is the stupendous

erection near Stockport, which by the bye filled my mind when a boy with wonder, constitutes the grand work of England, and yields to nothing in the world of the kind, with the exception of the great canal of China.

Retracing my steps some way I got upon the river's bank and then again proceeded in the direction of the west. I soon came to a cottage nearly opposite a bridge, which led over the river, not the bridge which I have already mentioned, but one much smaller, and considerably higher up the valley. The cottage had several dusky outbuildings attached to it, and a paling before it. Leaning over the paling in his shirt-sleeves was a dark-faced, short, thick-set man, who saluted me in English; I returned his salutation, stopped, and was soon in conversation with him. I praised the beauty of the river and its banks: he said that both were beautiful and delightful in summer, but not at all in winter, for then the trees and bushes on the banks were stripped of their leaves, and the river was a frightful torrent. He asked me if I had been to see the place called the Robber's Leap, as strangers generally went to see it. I inquired where it was.

'Yonder,' said he, pointing to some distance down the river.

'Why is it called the Robber's Leap?' said I.

'It is called the Robber's Leap, or Llam y Lleidyr,' said he, 'because a thief pursued by justice once leaped across the river there and escaped. It was an awful leap, and he well

deserved to escape after taking it.' I told him that I should go and look at it on some future opportunity, and then asked if there were many fish in the river. He said there were plenty of salmon and trout, and that owing to the river being tolerably high, a good many had been caught during the last few days. I asked him who enjoyed the right of fishing in the river. He said that in these parts the fishing belonged to two or three proprietors, who either preserved the fishing for themselves, as they best could by means of keepers, or let it out to other people; and that many individuals came not only from England, but from France and Germany, and even Russia for the purpose of fishing, and that the keepers of the proprietors from whom they purchased permission to fish went with them, to show them the best places, and to teach them how to fish. He added that there was a report that the river would shortly be rhydd or free and open to any one. I said that it would be a bad thing to fling the river open, as in that event the fish would be killed at all times and seasons, and eventually all destroyed. He replied that he questioned whether more fish would be taken then than now, and that I must not imagine that the fish were much protected by what was called preserving; that the people to whom the lands in the neighbourhood belonged, and those who paid for fishing did not catch a hundredth part of the fish which were caught in the river: that the proprietors went with their keepers, and perhaps caught two or

three stone of fish, or that strangers went with the keepers, whom they paid for teaching them how to fish, and perhaps caught half-a-dozen fish, and that shortly after the keepers would return and catch on their own account sixty stone of fish from the very spot where the proprietors or strangers had great difficulty in catching the two or three stone or the half-dozen fish, or the poachers would go and catch a yet greater quantity. He added that gentry did not understand how to catch fish, and that to attempt to preserve was nonsense. I told him that if the river was flung open everybody would fish; he said that I was much mistaken, that hundreds who were now poachers would then keep at home, mind their proper trades, and never use line or spear; that folks always longed to do what they were forbidden, and that Shimei would never have crossed the brook provided he had not been told he should be hanged if he did. That he himself had permission to fish in the river whenever he pleased, but never availed himself of it, though in his young time, when he had no leave, he had been an arrant poacher.

The manners and way of speaking of this old personage put me very much in mind of those of Morgan, described by Smollett in his immortal novel of 'Roderick Random.' I had more discourse with him: I asked him in what line of business he was, he told me that he sold coals. From his complexion, and the hue of his shirt, I had already concluded that he was in some

grimy trade. I then inquired of what religion he was, and received for answer that he was a Baptist. I thought that both himself and part of his apparel would look all the better for a good immersion. We talked of the war then raging—he said it was between the false prophet and the Dragon. I asked him who the Dragon was—he said the Turk. I told him that the Pope was far worse than either the Turk or the Russian, that his religion was the vilest idolatry, and that he would let no one alone. That it was the Pope who drove his fellow religionists the Anabaptists out of the Netherlands. He asked me how long ago that was. Between two and three hundred years I replied. He asked me the meaning of the word Anabaptist; I told him; whereupon he expressed great admiration for my understanding, and said that he hoped he should see me again.

I inquired of him to what place the bridge led; he told me that if I passed over it, and ascended a high bank beyond, I should find myself on the road from Llangollen to Corwen, and that if I wanted to go to Llangollen I must turn to the left. I thanked him, and passing over the bridge, and ascending the bank, found myself upon a broad road. I turned to the left, and walking briskly, in about half an hour reached our cottage in the northern suburb, where I found my family and dinner awaiting me.

CHAPTER IX

The Dinner—English Foibles—Pengwern—The Yew-Tree —Carn-lleidyr—Applications of a Term.

For dinner we had salmon and leg of mutton; the salmon from the Dee, the leg from the neighbouring Berwyn. The salmon was good enough, but I had eaten better; and here it will not be amiss to say, that the best salmon in the world is caught in the Suir, a river that flows past the beautiful town of Clonmel in Ireland. As for the leg of mutton it was truly wonderful; nothing so good had I ever tasted in the shape of a leg of mutton. The leg of mutton of Wales beats the leg of mutton of any other country, and I had never tasted a Welsh leg of mutton before. Certainly I shall never forget that first Welsh leg of mutton which I tasted, rich but delicate, replete with juices derived from the aromatic herbs of the noble Berwyn, cooked to a turn, and weighing just four pounds.

> 'O its savoury smell was great,
> Such as well might tempt, I trow,
> One that 's dead to lift his brow.'

Let any one who wishes to eat leg of mutton in perfection go to Wales, but mind you to eat leg of mutton only; Welsh leg of mutton is superlative; but with the exception of the leg, the

mutton of Wales is decidedly inferior to that of many other parts of Britain.

Here, perhaps, as I have told the reader what we ate for dinner, it will be as well to tell him what we drank at dinner. Let him know then, that with our salmon we drank water, and with our mutton, ale, even ale of Llangollen; but not the best ale of Llangollen; it was very fair; but I subsequently drank far better Llangollen ale than that which I drank at our first dinner in our cottage at Llangollen.

In the evening I went across the bridge and strolled along in a south-east direction. Just as I had cleared the suburb a man joined me from a cottage, on the top of a high bank, whom I recognized as the mower with whom I had held discourse in the morning. He saluted me and asked me if I were taking a walk, I told him I was, whereupon he said that if I were not too proud to wish to be seen walking with a poor man like himself, he should wish to join me. I told him I should be glad of his company, and that I was not ashamed to be seen walking with any person, however poor, who conducted himself with propriety. He replied that I must be very different from my countrymen in general, who were ashamed to be seen walking with any people, who were not, at least, as well dressed as themselves. I said that my country-folk in general had a great many admirable qualities, but at the same time a great many foibles, foremost amongst which last was a crazy admiration for what they called gentility, which made them

sycophantic to their superiors in station, and extremely insolent to those whom they considered below them. He said that I had spoken his very thoughts, and then asked me whether I wished to be taken the most agreeable walk near Llangollen.

On my replying by all means, he led me along the road to the south-east. A pleasant road it proved: on our right at some distance was the mighty Berwyn; close on our left the hill called Pen y Coed. I asked him what was beyond the Berwyn.

'A very wild country, indeed,' he replied, 'consisting of wood, rock, and river; in fact, an anialwch.'

He then asked if I knew the meaning of anialwch.

'A wilderness,' I replied, 'you will find the word in the Welsh Bible.'

'Very true, sir,' said he, 'it was there I met it, but I did not know the meaning of it, till it was explained to me by one of our teachers.'

On my inquiring of what religion he was, he told me he was a Calvinistic Methodist.

We passed an ancient building which stood on our right. I turned round to look at it. Its back was to the road: at its eastern end was a fine arched window like the oriel window of a church.

'That building,' said my companion, 'is called Pengwern Hall. It was once a convent of nuns; a little time ago a farm-house, but is now used as a barn, and a place of stowage. Till lately it

belonged to the Mostyn family, but they disposed of it, with the farm on which it stood, together with several other farms, to certain people from Liverpool, who now live yonder,' pointing to a house a little way farther on. I still looked at the edifice.

'You seem to admire the old building,' said my companion.

'I was not admiring it,' said I; 'I was thinking of the difference between its present and former state. Formerly it was a place devoted to gorgeous idolatry and obscene lust; now it is a quiet old barn in which hay and straw are placed, and broken tumbrels stowed away: surely the hand of God is visible here?'

'It is so, sir,' said the man in a respectful tone, 'and so it is in another place in this neighbourhood. About three miles from here, in the north-west part of the valley, is an old edifice. It is now a farm-house, but was once a splendid abbey, and was called——'

'The abbey of the vale of the cross,' said I, 'I have read a deal about it. Iolo Goch, the bard of your celebrated hero, Owen Glendower, was buried somewhere in its precincts.'

We went on: my companion took me over a stile behind the house which he had pointed out, and along a path through hazel coppices. After a little time I inquired whether there were any Papists in Llangollen.

'No,' said he, 'there is not one of that family at Llangollen, but I believe there are some in Flintshire, at a place called Holywell, where there

is a pool or fountain, the waters of which it is said they worship.'

'And so they do,' said I, 'true to the old Indian superstition, of which their religion is nothing but a modification. The Indians and sepoys worship stocks and stones, and the river Ganges, and our Papists worship stocks and stones, holy wells and fountains.'

He put some questions to me about the origin of nuns and friars. I told him they originated in India, and made him laugh heartily by showing him the original identity of nuns and nautch-girls, begging priests and begging Brahmins. We passed by a small house with an enormous yew-tree before it; I asked him who lived there.

'No one,' he replied, 'it is to let. It was originally a cottage, but the proprietors have furbished it up a little, and call it Yew-tree Villa.'

'I suppose they would let it cheap,' said I.

'By no means,' he replied, 'they ask eighty pounds a year for it.'

'What could have induced them to set such a rent upon it?' I demanded.

'The yew-tree, sir, which is said to be the largest in Wales. They hope that some of the grand gentry will take the house for the romance of the yew-tree, but somehow or other nobody has taken it, though it has been to let for three seasons.'

We soon came to a road leading east and west.

'This way,' said he, pointing in the direction

of the west, 'leads back to Llangollen, the other to Offa's Dyke and England.'

We turned to the west. He inquired if I had ever heard before of Offa's Dyke.

'O yes,' said I, 'it was built by an old Saxon king called Offa, against the incursions of the Welsh.'

'There was a time,' said my companion, 'when it was customary for the English to cut off the ears of every Welshman who was found to the east of the dyke, and for the Welsh to hang every Englishman whom they found to the west of it. Let us be thankful that we are now more humane to each other. We are now on the north side of Pen y Coed. Do you know the meaning of Pen y Coed, sir?'

'Pen y Coed,' said I, 'means the head of the wood. I suppose that in the old time the mountain looked over some extensive forest, even as the nunnery of Pengwern looked originally over an alder-swamp, for Pengwern means the head of the alder-swamp.'

'So it does, sir, I shouldn't wonder if you could tell me the real meaning of a word, about which I have thought a good deal, and about which I was puzzling my head last night as I lay in bed.'

'What may it be?' said I.

'Carn-lleidyr,' he replied: 'now, sir, do you know the meaning of that word?'

'I think I do,' said I.

'What may it be, sir?'

'First let me hear what you conceive its meaning to be,' said I.

'Why, sir, I should say that Carn-lleidyr is an out-and-out thief—one worse than a thief of the common sort. Now, if I steal a matrass I am a lleidyr, that is a thief of the common sort; but if I carry it to a person, and he buys it, knowing it to be stolen, I conceive he is a far worse thief than I; in fact, a carn-lleidyr.'

'The word is a double word,' said I, 'compounded of carn and lleidyr. The original meaning of carn is a heap of stones, and carn-lleidyr means properly a thief without house or home, and with no place on which to rest his head, save the carn or heap of stones on the bleak top of the mountain. For a long time the word was only applied to a thief of that description, who, being without house and home, was more desperate than other thieves, and as savage and brutish as the wolves and foxes with whom he occasionally shared his pillow, the carn. In course of time, however, the original meaning was lost or disregarded, and the term carn-lleidyr was applied to any particularly dishonest person. At present there can be no impropriety in calling a person who receives a matrass, knowing it to be stolen, a carn-lleidyr, seeing that he is worse than the thief who stole it, or in calling a knavish attorney a carn-lleidyr, seeing that he does far more harm than a common pickpocket; or in calling the Pope so, seeing that he gets huge sums of money out of people by pretending to be able to admit their souls to heaven, or to hurl them to the other place, knowing all the time that he has no such power;

perhaps, indeed, at the present day the term carn-lleidyr is more applicable to the Pope than to any one else, for he is certainly the arch thief of the world. So much for carn-lleidyr. But I must here tell you that the term carn may be applied to any one who is particularly bad or disagreeable in any respect, and now, I remember, has been applied for centuries both in prose and poetry. One Lewis Glyn Cothi, a poet who lived more than three hundred years ago, uses the word carn in the sense of arrant or exceedingly bad, for in his abusive ode to the town of Chester, he says that the women of London itself were never more carn strumpets than those of Chester, by which he means that there were never more arrant harlots in the world than those of the cheese capital. And the last of your great poets, Gronwy Owen, who flourished about the middle of the last century, complains in a letter to a friend, whilst living in a village of Lancashire, that he was amongst Carn Saeson. He found all English disagreeable enough, but those of Lancashire particularly so—savage, brutish louts, out-and-out John Bulls, and therefore he called them Carn Saeson.'

'Thank you, sir,' said my companion; 'I now thoroughly understand the meaning of carn. Whenever I go to Chester, and a dressed-up madam jostles against me, I shall call her carn-butein. The Pope of Rome I shall in future term carn-lleidyr y byd, or the arch thief of the world. And whenever I see a stupid, brutal Englishman swaggering about Llangollen, and

looking down upon us poor Welsh, I shall say to myself "Get home, you Carn Sais!" Well, sir, we are now near Llangollen; I must turn to the left. You go straight forward. I never had such an agreeable walk in my life. May I ask your name?'

I told him my name, and asked him for his.

'Edward Jones,' he replied.

CHAPTER X

The Berwyn—Mountain Cottage—The Barber's Pole.

On the following morning I strolled up the Berwyn on the south-west of the town, by a broad winding path, which was at first very steep, but by degrees became less so. When I had accomplished about three parts of the ascent I came to a place where the road, or path, divided into two. I took the one to the left, which seemingly led to the top of the mountain, and presently came to a cottage from which a dog rushed barking towards me; an old woman, however, coming to the door called him back. I said a few words to her in Welsh, whereupon in broken English she asked me to enter the cottage and take a glass of milk. I went in and sat down on a chair which a sickly-looking young woman handed to me. I asked her in English who she was, but she made no answer, whereupon the old woman told me that she was her daughter and had no English. I then asked her in Welsh what was the matter with her, she replied that she had the cryd or ague. The old woman now brought me a glass of milk, and said in the Welsh language that she hoped I should like it. What further conversation we had was in the Cambrian tongue. I asked the name of the dog, who was now fondling upon me, and

was told that his name was Pharaoh. I inquired if they had any books and was shown two, one a common Bible printed by the Bible Society, and the other a volume in which the Book of Prayer of the Church of England was bound up with the Bible, both printed at Oxford, about the middle of the last century. I found that both mother and daughter were Calvinistic Methodists. After a little further discourse I got up and gave the old woman twopence for the milk; she accepted it, but with great reluctance. I inquired whether by following the road I could get to the Pen y bryn or the top of the hill. They shook their heads, and the young woman said that I could not, as the road presently took a turn and went down. I asked her how I could get to the top of the hill. 'Which part of the top?' said she. 'I'r gor-uchaf,' I replied. 'That must be where the barber's pole stands,' said she. 'Why does the barber's pole stand there?' said I. 'A barber was hanged there a long time ago,' said she, 'and the pole was placed to show the spot.' 'Why was he hanged?' said I. 'For murdering his wife,' said she. I asked her some questions about the murder, but the only information she could give me was, that it was a very bad murder and occurred a long time ago. I had observed the pole from our garden, at Llangollen, but had concluded that it was a common flagstaff. I inquired the way to it. It was not visible from the cottage, but they gave me directions how to reach it. I bade them farewell, and in about

a quarter of an hour reached the pole on the top of the hill. I imagined that I should have a glorious view of the vale of Llangollen from the spot where it stood; the view, however, did not answer my expectations. I returned to Llangollen by nearly the same way by which I had come.

The remainder of the day I spent entirely with my family, whom at their particular request I took in the evening to see Plas Newydd, once the villa of the two ladies of Llangollen. It lies on the farther side of the bridge, at a little distance from the back part of the church. There is a thoroughfare through the grounds, which are not extensive. Plas Newydd or the New Place is a small gloomy mansion, with a curious dairy on the right-hand side, as you go up to it, and a remarkable stone pump. An old man whom we met in the grounds, and with whom I entered into conversation, said that he remembered the building of the house, and that the place where it now stands was called before its erection Pen y maes, or the head of the field.

CHAPTER XI

Welsh Farm-house—A Poet's Grandson—Hospitality—Mountain Village—Madoc—The Native Valley—Corpse Candles—The Midnight Call.

My curiosity having been rather excited with respect to the country beyond the Berwyn, by what my friend, the intelligent flannel-worker, had told me about it, I determined to go and see it. Accordingly on Friday morning I set out. Having passed by Pengwern Hall I turned up a lane in the direction of the south, with a brook on the right running amongst hazels, I presently arrived at a small farm-house standing on the left with a little yard before it. Seeing a woman at the door I asked her in English if the road in which I was would take me across the mountain—she said it would, and forthwith cried to a man working in a field who left his work and came towards us. 'That is my husband,' said she; 'he has more English than I.'

The man came up and addressed me in very good English: he had a brisk, intelligent look, and was about sixty. I repeated the question, which I had put to his wife, and he also said that by following the road I could get across the mountain. We soon got into conversation. He told me that the little farm in which he lived belonged to the person who had bought Peng-

wern Hall. He said that he was a good kind of gentleman, but did not like the Welsh. I asked him if the gentleman in question did not like the Welsh, why he came to live among them. He smiled, and I then said that I liked the Welsh very much, and was particularly fond of their language. He asked me whether I could read Welsh, and on my telling him I could, he said that if I would walk in he would show me a Welsh book. I went with him and his wife into a neat kind of kitchen, flagged with stone, where were several young people, their children. I spoke some Welsh to them which appeared to give them great satisfaction. The man went to a shelf, and taking down a book put it into my hand. It was a Welsh book, and the title of it in English was 'Evening Work of the Welsh.' It contained the lives of illustrious Welshmen, commencing with that of Cadwalader. I read a page of it aloud, while the family stood round and wondered to hear a Saxon read their language. I entered into discourse with the man about Welsh poetry and repeated the famous prophecy of Taliesin about the Coiling Serpent. I asked him if the Welsh had any poets at the present day. 'Plenty,' said he, 'and good ones—Wales can never be without a poet.' Then after a pause he said that he was the grandson of a great poet.

'Do you bear his name?' said I.

'I do,' he replied.

'What may it be?'

'Hughes,' he answered.

'Two of the name of Hughes have been poets,' said I—'one was Huw Hughes, generally termed the Bardd Coch, or red bard; he was an Anglesea man, and the friend of Lewis Morris and Gronwy Owen—the other was Jonathan Hughes, where he lived I know not.'

'He lived here, in this very house,' said the man. 'Jonathan Hughes was my grandfather!' and as he spoke his eyes flashed fire.

'Dear me!' said I, 'I read some of his pieces thirty-two years ago when I was a lad in England. I think I can repeat some of the lines.' I then repeated a quartet which I chanced to remember.

'Ah!' said the man, 'I see you know his poetry. Come into the next room and I will show you his chair.' He led me into a sleeping-room on the right hand, where in a corner he showed me an antique three-cornered arm-chair. 'That chair,' said he, 'my grandsire won at Llangollen, at an Eisteddfod of Bards. Various bards recited their poetry, but my grandfather won the prize. Ah, he was a good poet. He also won a prize of fifteen guineas at a meeting of bards in London.'

We returned to the kitchen, where I found the good woman of the house waiting with a plate of bread-and-butter in one hand, and a glass of buttermilk in the other—she pressed me to partake of both—I drank some of the buttermilk, which was excellent, and after a little more discourse shook the kind people by the hand and thanked them for their hospitality.

As I was about to depart the man said that I should find the lane farther up very wet, and that I had better mount through a field at the back of the house. He took me to a gate, which he opened, and then pointed out the way which I must pursue. As I went away he said that both he and his family should be always happy to see me at Ty yn y Pistyll, which words, interpreted, are the house by the spout of water.

I went up the field with the lane on my right, down which ran a runnel of water, from which doubtless the house derived its name. I soon came to an unenclosed part of the mountain covered with gorse and whin, and still proceeding upward reached a road, which I subsequently learned was the main road from Llangollen over the hill. I was not long in gaining the top, which was nearly level. Here I stood for some time looking about me, having the vale of Llangollen to the north of me, and a deep valley abounding with woods and rocks to the south.

Following the road to the south, which gradually descended, I soon came to a place where a road diverged from the straight one to the left. As the left-hand road appeared to lead down a romantic valley I followed it. The scenery was beautiful—steep hills on each side. On the right was a deep ravine, down which ran a brook; the hill beyond it was covered towards the top with a wood, apparently of oak, between which and the ravine were small green fields. Both sides of the ravine were fringed with trees,

chiefly ash. I descended the road which was zig-zag and steep, and at last arrived at the bottom of the valley, where was a small hamlet. On the farther side of the valley to the east was a steep hill on which were a few houses—at the foot of the hill was a brook crossed by an antique bridge of a single arch. I directed my course to the bridge, and after looking over the parapet for a minute or two upon the water below, which was shallow and noisy, ascended a road which led up the hill: a few scattered houses were on each side. I soon reached the top of the hill, where were some more houses, those which I had seen from the valley below. I was in a Welsh mountain village, which put me much in mind of the villages which I had strolled through of old in Castile and La Mancha; there were the same silence and desolation here as yonder away—the houses were built of the same material, namely, stone. I should perhaps have fancied myself for a moment in a Castilian or Manchegan mountain pueblicito, but for the abundance of trees which met my eye on every side.

In walking up this mountain village I saw no one, and heard no sound but the echo of my steps amongst the houses. As I returned, however, I saw a man standing at a door—he was a short figure, about fifty. He had an old hat on his head, a stick in his hand, and was dressed in a duffel greatcoat.

'Good day, friend,' said I; 'what may be the name of this place?'

'Pont Fadog, sir, is its name, for want of a better.'

'That 's a fine name,' said I; 'it signifies in English the bridge of Madoc.'

'Just so, sir; I see you know Welsh.'

'And I see you know English,' said I.

'Very little, sir; I can read English much better than I can speak it.'

'So can I Welsh,' said I. 'I suppose the village is named after the bridge.'

'No doubt it is, sir.'

'And why was the bridge called the bridge of Madoc?' said I.

'Because one Madoc built it, sir.'

'Was he the son of Owain Gwynedd?' said I.

'Ah, I see you know all about Wales, sir. Yes, sir; he built it, or I daresay he built it, Madawg ap Owain Gwynedd. I have read much about him—he was a great sailor, sir, and was the first to discover Tir y Gorllewin or America. Not many years ago his tomb was discovered there with an inscription in old Welsh—saying who he was, and how he loved the sea. I have seen the lines which were found on the tomb.'

'So have I,' said I; 'or at least those which were said to be found on a tomb: they run thus in English:—

> "Here, after sailing far I Madoc lie,
> Of Owain Gwynedd lawful progeny:
> The verdant land had little charms for me:
> From earliest youth I loved the dark-blue sea."'

'Ah, sir,' said the man, 'I see you know all about the son of Owain Gwynedd. Well, sir,

those lines, or something like them, were found upon the tomb of Madoc in America.'

'That I doubt,' said I.

'Do you doubt, sir, that Madoc discovered America?'

'Not in the least,' said I; 'but I doubt very much that his tomb was ever discovered with the inscription which you allude to upon it.'

'But it was, sir, I do assure you, and the descendants of Madoc and his people are still to be found in a part of America speaking the pure iaith Cymraeg, better Welsh than we of Wales do.'

'That I doubt,' said I. 'However, the idea is a pretty one; therefore cherish it. This is a beautiful country.'

'A very beautiful country, sir; there is none more beautiful in all Wales.'

'What is the name of the river, which runs beneath the bridge?'

'The Ceiriog, sir.'

'The Ceiriog,' said I; 'the Ceiriog!'

'Did you ever hear the name before, sir?'

'I have heard of the Eos Ceiriog,' said I; 'the Nightingale of Ceiriog.'

'That was Huw Morris, sir; he was called the Nightingale of Ceiriog.'

'Did he live hereabout?'

'O no, sir; he lived far away up towards the head of the valley, at a place called Pont y Meibion.'

'Are you acquainted with his works?' said I.

'O yes, sir, at least with some of them. I

have read the Marwnad on Barbara Middleton; and likewise the piece on Oliver and his men. Ah, it is a funny piece that—he did not like Oliver nor his men.'

'Of what profession are you?' said I; 'are you a schoolmaster or apothecary?'

'Neither, sir, neither; I am merely a poor shoemaker.'

'You know a great deal for a shoemaker,' said I.

'Ah, sir; there are many shoemakers in Wales who know much more than I.'

'But not in England,' said I. 'Well, farewell.'

'Farewell, sir. When you have any boots to mend or shoes, sir—I shall be happy to serve you.'

'I do not live in these parts,' said I.

'No, sir; but you are coming to live here.'

'How do you know that?' said I.

'I know it very well, sir; you left these parts very young, and went far away—to the East Indies, sir, where you made a large fortune in the medical line, sir; you are now coming back to your own valley, where you will buy a property, and settle down, and try to recover your language, sir, and your health, sir; for you are not the person you pretend to be, sir; I know you very well, and shall be happy to work for you.'

'Well,' said I, 'if I ever settle down here, I shall be happy to employ you. Farewell.'

I went back the way I had come, till I reached

the little hamlet. Seeing a small public-house, I entered it. A good-looking woman, who met me in the passage, ushered me into a neat sanded kitchen, handed me a chair, and inquired my commands; I sat down, and told her to bring me some ale; she brought it, and then seated herself by a bench close by the door.

'Rather a quiet place this,' said I, 'I have seen but two faces since I came over the hill, and yours is one.'

'Rather too quiet, sir,' said the good woman, 'one would wish to have more visitors.'

'I suppose,' said I, 'people from Llangollen occasionally come to visit you.'

'Sometimes, sir, for curiosity's sake; but very rarely—the way is very steep.'

'Do the Tylwyth Teg ever pay you visits?'

'The Tylwyth Teg, sir?'

'Yes; the fairies. Do they never come to have a dance on the green sward in this neighbourhood?'

'Very rarely, sir; indeed, I do not know how long it is since they have been seen.'

'You have never seen them?'

'I have not, sir; but I believe there are people living who have.'

'Are corpse candles ever seen on the bank of that river?'

'I have never heard of more than one being seen, sir, and that was at a place where a tinker was drowned a few nights after—there came down a flood; and the tinker in trying to cross by the usual ford was drowned.'

'And did the candle prognosticate, I mean foreshow his death?'

'It did, sir. When a person is to die his candle is seen a few nights before the time of his death.'

'Have you ever seen a corpse candle?'

'I have, sir; and as you seem to be a respectable gentleman, I will tell you all about it. When I was a girl, I lived with my parents, a little way from here. I had a cousin, a very good young man, who lived with his parents in the neighbourhood of our house. He was an exemplary young man, sir, and, having a considerable gift of prayer, was intended for the ministry; but he fell sick, and shortly became very ill indeed. One evening when he was lying in this state, as I was returning home from milking, I saw a candle proceeding from my cousin's house. I stood still and looked at it. It moved slowly forward for a little way, and then mounted high in the air above the wood, which stood not far in front of the house, and disappeared. Just three nights after that my cousin died.'

'And you think that what you saw was his corpse candle?'

'I do, sir! what else should it be?'

'Are deaths prognosticated by any other means than corpse candles?'

'They are, sir; by the knockers, and by a supernatural voice heard at night.'

'Have you ever heard the knockers, or the supernatural voice?'

'I have not, sir; but my father and mother, who are now dead, heard once a supernatural voice, and knocking. My mother had a sister who was married like herself, and expected to be confined. Day after day, however, passed away without her confinement taking place. My mother expected every moment to be summoned to her assistance, and was so anxious about her that she could not rest at night. One night, as she lay in bed by the side of her husband, between sleeping and waking, she heard of a sudden, a horse coming stump, stump, up to the door. Then there was a pause—she expected every moment to hear some one cry out, and tell her to come to her sister, but she heard no farther sound, neither voice nor stump of horse. She thought she had been deceived, so, without awakening her husband, she tried to go to sleep, but sleep she could not. The next night, at about the same time, she again heard a horse's feet coming stump, stump, up to the door. She now waked her husband and told him to listen. He did so, and both heard the stumping. Presently, the stumping ceased, and then there was a loud 'Hey!' as if somebody wished to wake them. 'Hey!' said my father, and they both lay for a minute, expecting to hear something more, but they heard nothing. My father then sprang out of bed, and looked out of the window; it was bright moonlight, but he saw nothing. The next night, as they lay in bed both asleep, they were suddenly aroused by a loud and terrible knocking. Out sprang my father from

the bed, flung open the window, and looked out, but there was no one at the door. The next morning, however, a messenger arrived with the intelligence that my aunt had had a dreadful confinement with twins in the night, and that both she and the babes were dead.'

'Thank you,' said I; and paying for my ale, I returned to Llangollen.

CHAPTER XII

A Calvinistic Methodist—Turn for Saxon—Our Congregation—Pont y Cyssylltau—Catherine Lingo.

I HAD inquired of the good woman of the house, in which we lived, whether she could not procure a person to accompany me occasionally in my walks, who was well acquainted with the strange nooks and corners of the country, and who could speak no language but Welsh; as I wished to increase my knowledge of colloquial Welsh by having a companion who would be obliged, in all he had to say to me, to address me in Welsh, and to whom I should perforce have to reply in that tongue. The good lady had told me that there was a tenant of hers, who lived in one of the cottages which looked into the perllan, who, she believed, would be glad to go with me, and was just the kind of man I was in quest of. The day after I had met with the adventures, which I have related in the preceding chapter, she informed me that the person in question was awaiting my orders in the kitchen. I told her to let me see him. He presently made his appearance. He was about forty-five years of age, of middle stature, and had a good-natured open countenance. His dress was poor, but clean.

'Well,' said I to him in Welsh, 'are you the Cumro who can speak no Saxon?'

'In truth, sir, I am.'

'Are you sure that you know no Saxon?'

'Sir! I may know a few words, but I cannot converse in Saxon, nor understand a conversation in that tongue.'

'Can you read Cumraeg?'

'In truth, sir, I can.'

'What have you read in it?'

'I have read, sir, the Ysgrythyr-lan, till I have it nearly at the ends of my fingers.'

'Have you read anything else besides the Holy Scripture?'

'I read the newspaper, sir, when kind friends lend it to me.'

'In Cumraeg?'

'Yes, sir, in Cumraeg. I can read Saxon a little, but not sufficient to understand a Saxon newspaper.'

'What newspaper do you read?'

'I read, sir, "Yr Amserau."'

'Is that a good newspaper?'

'Very good, sir, it is written by good men.'

'Who are they?'

'They are our ministers, sir.'

'Of what religion are you?'

'A Calvinistic Methodist, sir.'

'Why are you of the Methodist religion?'

'Because it is the true religion, sir.'

'You should not be bigoted. If I had more Cumraeg than I have, I would prove to you that the only true religion is that of the Lloegrian Church.'

'In truth, sir, you could not do that; had you

all the Cumraeg in Cumru you could not do that.'

'What are you by trade?'

'I am a gwehydd, sir.'

'What do you earn by weaving?'

'About five shillings a week, sir.'

'Have you a wife?'

'I have, sir.'

'Does she earn anything?'

'Very seldom, sir; she is a good wife, but is generally sick.'

'Have you children?'

'I have three, sir.'

'Do they earn anything?'

'My eldest son, sir, sometimes earns a few pence, the others are very small.'

'Will you sometimes walk with me, if I pay you?'

'I shall be always glad to walk with you, sir, whether you pay me or not.'

'Do you think it lawful to walk with one of the Lloegrian Church?'

'Perhaps, sir, I ought to ask the gentleman of the Lloegrian Church whether he thinks it lawful to walk with the poor Methodist weaver.'

'Well, I think we may venture to walk with one another. What is your name?'

'John Jones, sir.'

'Jones! Jones! I was walking with a man of that name the other night.'

'The man with whom you walked the other night is my brother, sir, and what he said to me about you made me wish to walk with you also.'

'But he spoke very good English.'

'My brother had a turn for Saxon, sir; I had not. Some people have a turn for the Saxon, others have not. I have no Saxon, sir, my wife has digon iawn—my two youngest children speak good Saxon, sir, my eldest son not a word.'

'Well; shall we set out?'

'If you please, sir.'

'To what place shall we go?'

'Shall we go to the Pont y Cyssylltau, sir?'

'What is that?'

'A mighty bridge, sir, which carries the Camlas over a valley on its back.'

'Good! let us go and see the bridge of the junction, for that I think is the meaning in Saxon of Pont y Cyssylltau.'

We set out; my guide conducted me along the bank of the Camlas in the direction of Rhiwabon, that is towards the east. On the way we discoursed on various subjects, and understood each other tolerably well. I asked if he had ever been anything besides a weaver. He told me that when a boy he kept sheep on the mountain. 'Why did you not go on keeping sheep?' said I; 'I would rather keep sheep than weave.'

'My parents wanted me at home, sir,' said he; 'and I was not sorry to go home; I earned little, and lived badly.'

'A shepherd,' said I, 'can earn more than five shillings a week.'

'I was never a regular shepherd, sir,' said he. 'But, sir, I would rather be a weaver with five

shillings a week in Llangollen, than a shepherd with fifteen on the mountain. The life of a shepherd, sir, is perhaps not exactly what you and some other gentlefolks think. The shepherd bears much cold and wet, sir, and he is very lonely; no society save his sheep and dog. Then, sir, he has no privileges. I mean gospel privileges. He does not look forward to Dydd Sul, as a day of llawenydd, of joy and triumph, as the weaver does; that is, if he is religiously disposed. The shepherd has no chapel, sir, like the weaver. O sir, I say again that I would rather be a weaver in Llangollen with five shillings a week, than a shepherd on the hill with fifteen.'

'Do you mean to say,' said I, 'that you live with your family on five shillings a week?'

'No, sir. I frequently do little commissions by which I earn something. Then, sir, I have friends, very good friends. A good lady of our congregation sent me this morning half-a-pound of butter. The people of our congregation are very kind to each other, sir.'

'That is more,' thought I to myself, 'than the people of my congregation are; they are always cutting each other's throats.' I next asked if he had been much about Wales.

'Not much, sir. However, I have been to Pen Caer Gybi, which you call Holyhead, and to Bethgelert, sir.'

'What took you to those places?'

'I was sent to those places on business, sir; as I told you before, sir, I sometimes execute

commissions. At Bethgelert I stayed some time. It was there I married, sir; my wife comes from a place called Dol Gellyn near Bethgelert.'

'What was her name?'

'Her name was Jones, sir.'

'What, before she married?'

'Yes, sir, before she married. You need not be surprised, sir; there are plenty of the name of Jones in Wales. The name of my brother's wife, before she married, was also Jones.'

'Your brother is a clever man,' said I.

'Yes, sir, for a Cumro he is clebber enough.'

'For a Cumro?'

'Yes, sir, he is not a Saxon, you know.'

'Are Saxons then so very clever?'

'O yes, sir; who so clebber? The clebberest people in Llangollen are Saxons; that is, at carnal things—for at spiritual things I do not think them at all clebber. Look at Mr. A., sir.'

'Who is he?'

'Do you not know him, sir? I thought everybody knew Mr. A. He is a Saxon, sir, and keeps the inn on the road a little way below where you live. He is the clebberest man in Llangollen, sir. He can do everything. He is a great cook, and can wash clothes better than any woman. O, sir, for carnal things, who so clebber as your countrymen!'

After walking about four miles by the side of the canal we left it, and bearing to the right presently came to the aqueduct, which strode over a deep and narrow valley, at the bottom

of which ran the Dee. 'This is the Pont y Cysswllt, sir,' said my guide; 'it 's the finest bridge in the world, and no wonder, if what the common people say be true, namely, that every stone cost a golden sovereign.' We went along it; the height was awful. My guide, though he had been a mountain shepherd, confessed that he was somewhat afraid. 'It gives me the pendro, sir,' said he, 'to look down.' I too felt somewhat dizzy, as I looked over the parapet into the glen. The canal which this mighty bridge carries across the gulf is about nine feet wide, and occupies about two-thirds of the width of the bridge and the entire western side. The footway is towards the east. From about the middle of the bridge there is a fine view of the forges on the Cefn Bach and also of a huge hill near it called the Cefn Mawr. We reached the termination, and presently crossing the canal by a little wooden bridge, we came to a village. My guide then said, 'If you please, sir, we will return by the old bridge, which leads across the Dee in the bottom of the vale.' He then led me by a romantic road to a bridge on the west of the aqueduct, and far below. It seemed very ancient. 'This is the old bridge, sir,' said my guide; 'it was built a hundred years before the Pont y Cysswllt was dreamt of.' We now walked to the west, in the direction of Llangollen, along the bank of the river. Presently we arrived where the river, after making a bend, formed a pool. It was shaded by lofty trees, and to all appearance was exceedingly deep. I

stopped to look at it, for I was struck with its gloomy horror. 'That pool, sir,' said John Jones, 'is called Llyn y Meddwyn, the drunkard's pool. It is called so, sir, because a drunken man once fell into it, and was drowned. There is no deeper pool in the Dee, sir, save one, a little below Llangollen, which is called the pool of Catherine Lingo. A girl of that name fell into it, whilst gathering sticks on the high bank above it. She was drowned, and the pool was named after her. I never look at either without shuddering, thinking how certainly I should be drowned if I fell in, for I cannot swim, sir.'

'You should have learnt to swim when you were young,' said I, 'and to dive too. I know one who has brought up stones from the bottom, I daresay, of deeper pools than either, but he was a Saxon, and at carnal things, you know, none so clebber as the Saxons.'

I found my guide a first-rate walker and a good botanist, knowing the names of all the plants and trees in Welsh. By the time we returned to Llangollen I had formed a very high opinion of him, in which I was subsequently confirmed by what I saw of him during the period of our acquaintance, which was of some duration. He was very honest, disinterested, and exceedingly good-humoured. It is true, he had his little skits occasionally at the Church, and showed some marks of hostility to the Church cat, more especially when he saw it mounted on my shoulders; for the creature soon began to take liberties, and in less than a week after my arrival

at the cottage, generally mounted on my back, when it saw me reading or writing, for the sake of the warmth. But setting aside those same skits at the Church and that dislike of the Church cat, venial trifles after all, and easily to be accounted for, on the score of his religious education, I found nothing to blame and much to admire in John Jones, the Calvinistic Methodist of Llangollen.

CHAPTER XIII

Divine Service—Llangollen Bells—Iolo Goch—The Abbey —Twm o'r Nant—Holy Well—Thomas Edwards.

SUNDAY arrived—a Sunday of unclouded sunshine. We attended divine service at church in the morning. The congregation was very numerous, but to all appearance consisted almost entirely of English visitors, like ourselves. There were two officiating clergymen, father and son. They both sat in a kind of oblong pulpit on the southern side of the church, at a little distance below the altar. The service was in English, and the elder gentleman preached; there was good singing and chanting.

After dinner I sat in an arbour in the perllan thinking of many things, amongst others, spiritual. Whilst thus engaged the sound of the church bells calling people to afternoon service came upon my ears. I listened and thought I had never heard bells with so sweet a sound. I had heard them in the morning, but without paying much attention to them, but as I now sat in the umbrageous arbour I was particularly struck with them. O, how sweetly their voice mingled with the low rush of the river, at the bottom of the perllan. I subsequently found that the bells of Llangollen were celebrated for their sweetness. Their merit indeed has even

been admitted by an enemy; for a poet of the Calvinistic Methodist persuasion, one who calls himself Einion Du, in a very beautiful ode, commencing with—

'Tangnefedd i Llangollen,'

says that in no part of the world do bells call people so sweetly to church as those of Llangollen town.

In the evening, at about half-past six, I attended service again, but without my family. This time the congregation was not numerous, and was composed principally of poor people. The service and sermon were now in Welsh, the sermon was preached by the younger gentleman, and was on the building of the second temple, and, as far as I understood it, appeared to me to be exceedingly good.

On the Monday evening, myself and family took a walk to the abbey. My wife and daughter, who are fond of architecture and ruins, were very anxious to see the old place. I too was anxious enough to see it, less from love of ruins and ancient architecture, than from knowing that a certain illustrious bard was buried in its precincts, of whom perhaps a short account will not be unacceptable to the reader.

This man, whose poetical appellation was Iolo Goch, but whose real name was Llwyd, was of a distinguished family, and Lord of Llechryd. He was born and generally resided at a place called Coed y Pantwn, in the upper part of the Vale of Clwyd. He was a warm

friend and partisan of Owen Glendower, with whom he lived, at Sycharth, for some years before the great Welsh insurrection, and whom he survived, dying at an extreme old age beneath his own roof-tree at Coed y Pantwn. He composed pieces of great excellence on various subjects; but the most remarkable of his compositions are decidedly certain ones connected with Owen Glendower. Amongst these is one in which he describes the Welsh chieftain's mansion at Sycharth, and his hospitable way of living at that his favorite residence; and another in which he hails the advent of the comet, which made its appearance in the month of March, fourteen hundred and two, as of good augury to his darling hero.

It was from knowing that this distinguished man lay buried in the precincts of the old edifice that I felt so anxious to see it. After walking about two miles we perceived it on our right hand.

The abbey of the vale of the cross stands in a green meadow, in a corner near the north-west end of the valley of Llangollen. The vale or glen, in which the abbey stands, takes its name from a certain ancient pillar or cross, called the pillar of Eliseg, and which is believed to have been raised over the body of an ancient British chieftain of that name, who perished in battle against the Saxons, about the middle of the tenth century. In the Papist times the abbey was a place of great pseudo-sanctity, wealth and consequence. The territory belonging to it was

very extensive, comprising, amongst other districts, the vale of Llangollen and the mountain region to the north of it, called the Eglwysig Rocks, which region derived its name Eglwysig, or ecclesiastical, from the circumstance of its pertaining to the abbey of the vale of the cross.

We first reached that part of the building which had once been the church, having previously to pass through a farm-yard, in which was abundance of dirt and mire.

The church fronts the west and contains the remains of a noble window, beneath which is a gate, which we found locked. Passing on we came to that part where the monks had lived, but which now served as a farm-house; an open doorway exhibited to us an ancient gloomy hall, where was some curious old-fashioned furniture, particularly an ancient rack, in which stood a goodly range of pewter trenchers. A respectable dame kindly welcomed us and invited us to sit down. We entered into conversation with her, and asked her name, which she said was Evans. I spoke some Welsh to her, which pleased her. She said that Welsh people at the present day were so full of fine airs that they were above speaking the old language—but that such was not the case formerly, and that she had known a Mrs. Price, who was housekeeper to the Countess of Mornington, who lived in London upwards of forty years, and at the end of that time prided herself upon speaking as good Welsh as she did when a girl. I spoke to her about the abbey, and asked if she had ever heard of

Iolo Goch. She inquired who he was. I told her he was a great bard, and was buried in the abbey. She said she had never heard of him, but that she could show me the portrait of a great poet, and going away, presently returned with a print in a frame.

'There,' said she, 'is the portrait of Twm o'r Nant, generally called the Welsh Shakespear.'

I looked at it. The Welsh Shakespear was represented sitting at a table with a pen in his hand; a cottage-latticed window was behind him, on his left hand; a shelf with plates, and trenchers behind him, on his right. His features were rude, but full of wild, strange expression; below the picture was the following couplet:—

'Llun Gwr yw llawn gwir Awen;
Y Byd a lanwodd o'i Ben.'

'Did you ever hear of Twm o'r Nant?' said the old dame.

'I never heard of him by word of mouth,' said I; 'but I know all about him—I have read his life in Welsh, written by himself, and a curious life it is. His name was Thomas Edwards, but he generally called himself Twm o'r Nant, or Tom of the Dingle, because he was born in a dingle, at a place called Pen Porchell in the vale of Clwyd—which, by the bye, was on the estate which once belonged to Iolo Goch, the poet I was speaking to you about just now. Tom was a carter by trade, but once kept a toll-bar in South Wales, which, however, he was obliged to leave at the end of two years, owing

to the annoyance which he experienced from ghosts and goblins, and unearthly things, particularly phantom hearses, which used to pass through his gate at midnight without paying, when the gate was shut.'

'Ah,' said the dame, 'you know more about Tom o'r Nant than I do; and was he not a great poet?'

'I daresay he was,' said I, 'for the pieces which he wrote, and which he called Interludes, had a great run, and he got a great deal of money by them, but I should say the lines beneath the portrait are more applicable to the real Shakespear than to him.'

'What do the lines mean?' said the old lady; 'they are Welsh, I know, but they are far beyond my understanding.'

'They may be thus translated,' said I:

> 'God in his head the Muse instill'd,
> And from his head the world he fill'd.'

'Thank you, sir,' said the old lady—'I never found any one before who could translate them.' She then said she would show me some English lines written on the daughter of a friend of hers who was lately dead, and put some printed lines in a frame into my hand. They were an Elegy to Mary, and were very beautiful. I read them aloud, and when I had finished she thanked me and said she had no doubt that if I pleased I could put them into Welsh—she then sighed and wiped her eyes.

On our inquiring whether we could see the

interior of the abbey she said we could, and that if we rang a bell at the gate a woman would come to us, who was in the habit of showing the place. We then got up and bade her farewell—but she begged that we would stay and taste the dwr santaidd of the holy well.

'What holy well is that?' said I.

'A well,' said she, 'by the road's side, which in the time of the popes was said to perform wonderful cures.'

'Let us taste it by all means,' said I; whereupon she went out, and presently returned with a tray on which were a jug and tumbler, the jug filled with the water of the holy well; we drank some of the dwr santaidd, which tasted like any other water, and then after shaking her by the hand, we went to the gate, and rang at the bell.

Presently a woman made her appearance at the gate—she was genteelly dressed, about the middle age, rather tall and bearing in her countenance the traces of beauty. When we told her the object of our coming she admitted us, and after locking the gate conducted us into the church. It was roofless, and had nothing remarkable about it, save the western window, which we had seen from without. Our attendant pointed out to us some tombs, and told us the names of certain great people whose dust they contained. 'Can you tell us where Iolo Goch lies interred?' said I.

'No,' said she; 'indeed I never heard of such a person.'

'He was the bard of Owen Glendower,' said I, 'and assisted his cause wonderfully by the fiery odes, in which he incited the Welsh to rise against the English.'

'Indeed!' said she; 'well, I am sorry to say that I never heard of him.'

'Are you Welsh?' said I.

'I am,' she replied.

'Did you ever hear of Thomas Edwards?'

'O yes,' said she; 'I have frequently heard of him.'

'How odd,' said I, 'that the name of a great poet should be unknown in the very place where he is buried, whilst that of one certainly not his superior should be well known in that same place, though he is not buried there.'

'Perhaps,' said she, 'the reason is that the poet, whom you mentioned, wrote in the old measures and language which few people now understand, whilst Thomas Edwards wrote in common verse and in the language of the present day.'

'I daresay it is so,' said I.

From the church she led us to other parts of the ruin—at first she had spoken to us rather cross and loftily, but she now became kind and communicative. She said that she resided near the ruins, which she was permitted to show, that she lived alone, and wished to be alone—there was something singular about her, and I believe that she had a history of her own. After showing us the ruins she conducted us to a cottage in which she lived; it stood behind the

ruins by a fish-pond, in a beautiful and romantic place, enough—she said that in the winter she went away, but to what place she did not say. She asked us whether we came walking, and on our telling her that we did, she said that she would point out to us a near way home. She then pointed to a path up a hill, telling us we must follow it. After making her a present we bade her farewell, and passing through a meadow crossed a brook by a rustic bridge, formed of the stem of a tree, and ascending the hill by the path which she had pointed out, we went through a corn-field or two on its top, and at last found ourselves on the Llangollen road, after a most beautiful walk.

CHAPTER XIV

Expedition to Ruthyn—The Column—Slate Quarries—The Gwyddelod—Nocturnal Adventure.

NOTHING worthy of commemoration took place during the two following days, save that myself and family took an evening walk on the Wednesday up the side of the Berwyn, for the purpose of botanizing, in which we were attended by John Jones. There, amongst other plants, we found a curious moss which our good friend said was called in Welsh, Corn Carw, or deer's horn, and which he said the deer were very fond of. On the Thursday he and I started on an expedition on foot to Ruthyn, distant about fourteen miles, proposing to return in the evening.

The town and castle of Ruthyn possessed great interest for me from being connected with the affairs of Owen Glendower. It was at Ruthyn that the first and not the least remarkable scene of the Welsh insurrection took place by Owen making his appearance at the fair held there in fourteen hundred, plundering the English who had come with their goods, slaying many of them, sacking the town and concluding his day's work by firing it; and it was at the castle of Ruthyn that Lord Grey dwelt, a minion of Henry the Fourth and Glendower's deadliest enemy, and who was the

principal cause of the chieftain's entering into rebellion, having in the hope of obtaining his estates in the vale of Clwyd, poisoned the mind of Henry against him, who proclaimed him a traitor, before he had committed any act of treason, and confiscated his estates, bestowing that part of them upon his favorite, which the latter was desirous of obtaining.

We started on our expedition at about seven o'clock of a brilliant morning. We passed by the abbey and presently came to a small fountain with a little stone edifice, with a sharp top above it. 'That is the holy well,' said my guide: 'Llawer iawn o barch yn yr amser yr Pabyddion yr oedd i'r fynnon hwn—much respect in the times of the Papists there was to this fountain.'

'I heard of it,' said I, 'and tasted of its water the other evening at the abbey'; shortly after we saw a tall stone standing in a field on our right hand at about a hundred yards' distance from the road. 'That is the pillar of Eliseg, sir,' said my guide. 'Let us go and see it,' said I. We soon reached the stone. It is a fine upright column about seven feet high, and stands on a quadrate base. 'Sir,' said my guide, 'a dead king lies buried beneath this stone. He was a mighty man of valour and founded the abbey. He was called Eliseg.' 'Perhaps Ellis,' said I, 'and if his name was Ellis his stone was very properly called Colofn Eliseg, in Saxon the Ellisian column.' The view from the column is very beautiful, below on the south-east is the venerable abbey, slumbering in its green meadow.

Beyond it runs a stream, descending from the top of a glen, at the bottom of which the old pile is situated; beyond the stream is a lofty hill. The glen on the north is bounded by a noble mountain, covered with wood. Struck with its beauty I inquired its name. 'Moel Eglwysig, sir,' said my guide. 'The Moel of the Church,' said I. 'That is hardly a good name for it, for the hill is not bald (moel).' 'True, sir,' said John Jones. 'At present its name is good for nothing, but estalom (of old) before the hill was planted with trees its name was good enough. Our fathers were not fools when they named their hills.' 'I daresay not,' said I, 'nor in many other things which they did, for which we laugh at them, because we do not know the reasons they had for doing them.' We regained the road; the road tended to the north up a steep ascent. I asked John Jones the name of a beautiful village, which lay far away on our right, over the glen, and near its top. 'Pentref y dwr, sir' (the village of the water). It is called the village of the water, because the river below comes down through part of it. I next asked the name of the hill up which we were going, and he told me Allt Bwlch; that is, the high place of the hollow road.

This bwlch, or hollow way, was a regular pass, which put me wonderfully in mind of the passes of Spain. It took us a long time to get to the top. After resting a minute on the summit we began to descend. My guide pointed out to me some slate-works, at some distance on our left.

'There is a great deal of work going on there, sir,' said he: 'all the slates that you see descending the canal at Llangollen come from there.' The next moment we heard a blast, and then a thundering sound: 'Llais craig yn syrthiaw; the voice of the rock in falling, sir,' said John Jones; 'blasting is dangerous and awful work.' We reached the bottom of the descent, and proceeded for two or three miles up and down a rough and narrow road; I then turned round and looked at the hills which we had passed over. They looked bulky and huge.

We continued our way, and presently saw marks of a fire in some grass by the side of the road. 'Have the Gipsiaid been there?' said I to my guide.

'Hardly, sir; I should rather think that the Gwyddeliad (Irish) have been camping there lately.'

'The Gwyddeliad?'

'Yes, sir, the vagabond Gwyddeliad, who at present infest these parts much, and do much more harm than the Gipsiaid ever did.'

'What do you mean by the Gipsiaid?'

'Dark, handsome people, sir, who occasionally used to come about in vans and carts, the men buying and selling horses, and sometimes tinkering, whilst the women told fortunes.'

'And they have ceased to come about?'

'Nearly so, sir; I believe they have been frightened away by the Gwyddelod.'

'What kind of people are these Gwyddelod?'

'Savage, brutish people, sir; in general with-

out shoes and stockings, with coarse features and heads of hair like mops.'

'How do they live?'

'The men tinker a little, sir, but more frequently plunder. The women tell fortunes, and steal whenever they can.'

'They live something like the Gipsiaid.'

'Something, sir; but the hen Gipsiaid were gentlefolks in comparison.'

'You think the Gipsiaid have been frightened away by the Gwyddelians?'

'I do, sir; the Gwyddelod made their appearance in these parts about twenty years ago, and since then the Gipsiaid have been rarely seen.'

'Are these Gwyddelod poor?'

'By no means, sir; they make large sums by plundering and other means, with which, 'tis said, they retire at last to their own country or America, where they buy land and settle down.'

'What language do they speak?'

'English, sir; they pride themselves on speaking good English, that is, to the Welsh. Amongst themselves they discourse in their own Paddy Gwyddel.'

'Have they no Welsh?'

'Only a few words, sir; I never heard one of them speaking Welsh, save a young girl—she fell sick by the roadside, as she was wandering by herself—some people at a farm-house took her in, and tended her till she was well. During her sickness she took a fancy to their quiet way of life, and when she was recovered she begged

to stay with them and serve them. They consented; she became a very good servant, and, hearing nothing but Welsh spoken, soon picked up the tongue.'

'Do you know what became of her?'

'I do, sir; her own people found her out, and wished to take her away with them, but she refused to let them, for by that time she was perfectly reclaimed, had been to chapel, renounced her heathen crefydd, and formed an acquaintance with a young Methodist who had a great gift of prayer, whom she afterwards married—she and her husband live at present not far from Mineira.'

'I almost wonder that her own people did not kill her.'

'They threatened to do so, sir, and would doubtless have put their threat into execution, had they not been prevented by the Man on High.'

And here my guide pointed with his finger reverently upward.

'Is it a long time since you have seen any of these Gwyddeliad?'

'About two months, sir, and then a terrible fright they caused me.'

'How was that?'

'I will tell you, sir; I had been across the Berwyn to carry home a piece of weaving work to a person who employs me. It was night as I returned, and when I was about half-way down the hill, at a place which is called Allt Paddy, because the Gwyddelod are in the habit of taking

up their quarters there, I came upon a gang of them, who had come there and camped and lighted their fire, whilst I was on the other side of the hill. There were nearly twenty of them, men and women, and amongst the rest was a man standing naked in a tub of water with two women stroking him down with clouts. He was a large fierce-looking fellow, and his body, on which the flame of the fire glittered, was nearly covered with red hair. I never saw such a sight. As I passed they glared at me and talked violently in their Paddy Gwyddel, but did not offer to molest me. I hastened down the hill, and right glad I was when I found myself safe and sound at my house in Llangollen, with my money in my pocket, for I had several shillings there, which the man across the hill had paid me for the work which I had done.'

CHAPTER XV

The Turf Tavern—Don't Understand—The Best Welsh—The Maids of Merion—Old and New—Ruthyn—The Ash Yggdrasill.

We now emerged from the rough and narrow way which we had followed for some miles, upon one much wider, and more commodious, which my guide told me was the coach road from Wrexham to Ruthyn, and going on a little farther we came to an avenue of trees which shaded the road. It was chiefly composed of ash, sycamore and birch, and looked delightfully cool and shady. I asked my guide if it belonged to any gentleman's house. He told me that it did not, but to a public-house, called Tafarn Tywarch, which stood near the end, a little way off the road. 'Why is it called Tafarn Tywarch?' said I, struck by the name which signifies 'the tavern of turf.'

'It was called so, sir,' said John, 'because it was originally merely a turf hovel, though at present it consists of good brick and mortar.'

'Can we breakfast there,' said I, 'for I feel both hungry and thirsty?'

'O yes, sir,' said John, 'I have heard there is good cheese and cwrw there.'

We turned off to the 'tafarn,' which was a decent public-house of rather an antiquated appearance. We entered a sanded kitchen, and

sat down by a large oaken table. 'Please to bring us some bread, cheese and ale,' said I in Welsh to an elderly woman, who was moving about.

'Sar?' said she.

'Bring us some bread, cheese and ale,' I repeated in Welsh.

'I do not understand you, sar,' said she in English.

'Are you Welsh?' said I in English.

'Yes, I am Welsh!'

'And can you speak Welsh?'

'O yes, and the best.'

'Then why did you not bring what I asked for?'

'Because I did not understand you.'

'Tell her,' said I to John Jones, 'to bring us some bread, cheese and ale.'

'Come, aunt,' said John, 'bring us bread and cheese and a quart of the best ale.'

The woman looked as if she was going to reply in the tongue in which he addressed her, then faltered, and at last said in English, that she did not understand.

'Now,' said I, 'you are fairly caught: this man is a Welshman, and moreover understands no language but Welsh.'

'Then how can he understand you?' said she.

'Because I speak Welsh,' said I.

'Then you are a Welshman?' said she.

'No I am not,' said I, 'I am English.'

'So I thought,' said she, 'and on that account I could not understand you.'

'You mean that you would not,' said I. 'Now do you choose to bring what you are bidden?'

'Come, aunt,' said John, 'don't be silly and cenfigenus, but bring the breakfast.'

The woman stood still for a moment or two, and then biting her lips went away.

'What made the woman behave in this manner?' said I to my companion.

'O she was cenfigenus, sir,' he replied; 'she did not like that an English gentleman should understand Welsh; she was envious; you will find a dozen or two like her in Wales; but, let us hope, not more.'

Presently the woman returned with the bread, cheese and ale, which she placed on the table.

'Oh,' said I, 'you have brought what was bidden, though it was never mentioned to you in English, which shows that your pretending not to understand was all a sham. What made you behave so?'

'Why, I thought,' said the woman, 'that no Englishman could speak Welsh, that his tongue was too short.'

'Your having thought so,' said I, 'should not have made you tell a falsehood, saying that you did not understand, when you knew that you understood very well. See what a disgraceful figure you cut.'

'I cut no disgraced figure,' said the woman: 'after all, what right have the English to come here speaking Welsh, which belongs to the Welsh alone, who in fact are the only people that understand it.'

'Are you sure that you understand Welsh?' said I.

'I should think so,' said the woman, 'for I come from the Vale of Clwyd, where they speak the best Welsh in the world, the Welsh of the Bible.'

'What do they call a salmon in the Vale of Clwyd?' said I.

'What do they call a salmon?' said the woman.

'Yes,' said I, 'when they speak Welsh.'

'They call it—they call it—why, a salmon.'

'Pretty Welsh!' said I. 'I thought you did not understand Welsh.'

'Well, what do you call it?' said the woman.

'Eawg,' said I, 'that is the word for a salmon in general—but there are words also to show the sex—when you speak of a male salmon you should say cemyw, when of a female hwyfell.'

'I never heard the words before,' said the woman, 'nor do I believe them to be Welsh.'

'You say so,' said I, 'because you do not understand Welsh.'

'I not understand Welsh!' said she. 'I'll soon show you that I do. Come, you have asked me the word for salmon in Welsh, I will now ask you the word for salmon-trout. Now tell me that, and I will say you know something of the matter.'

'A tinker of my country can tell you that,' said I. 'The word for salmon-trout is gleisiad.'

The countenance of the woman fell.

'I see you know something about the matter,'

said she; 'there are very few hereabouts, though so near to the Vale of Clwyd, who know the word for salmon-trout in Welsh, I shouldn't have known the word myself, but for the song which says:—

Glân yw 'r gleisiad yn y llyn.'

'And who wrote that song?' said I.

'I don't know,' said the woman.

'But I do,' said I; 'one Lewis Morris wrote it.'

'Oh,' said she, 'I have heard all about Huw Morris.'

'I was not talking of Huw Morris,' said I, 'but Lewis Morris, who lived long after Huw Morris. He was a native of Anglesea, but resided for some time in Merionethshire, and, whilst there, composed a song about the Morwynion bro Meirionydd or the lasses of County Merion, of a great many stanzas, in one of which the gleisiad is mentioned. Here it is in English:—

"Full fair the gleisiad in the flood,
Which sparkles 'neath the summer's sun,
And fair the thrush in green abode
Spreading his wings in sportive fun,
But fairer look if truth be spoke
The maids of County Merion."'

The woman was about to reply, but I interrupted her.

'There,' said I, 'pray leave us to our breakfast, and the next time you feel inclined to talk nonsense about no Englishman's understanding

Welsh, or knowing anything of Welsh matters, remember that it was an Englishman who told you the Welsh word for salmon, and likewise the name of the Welshman who wrote the song in which the gleisiad is mentioned.'

The ale was very good and so were the bread and cheese. The ale indeed was so good that I ordered a second jug. Observing a large antique portrait over the mantelpiece, I got up to examine it. It was that of a gentleman in a long wig, and underneath it was painted in red letters 'Sir Watkin Wynn 1742.' It was doubtless the portrait of the Sir Watkin who in 1745 was committed to the Tower under suspicion of being suspected of holding Jacobite opinions and favouring the Pretender. The portrait was a very poor daub, but I looked at it long and attentively as a memorial of Wales at a critical and long-past time.

When we had dispatched the second jug of ale, and I had paid the reckoning, we departed and soon came to where stood a turnpike house at a junction of two roads, to each of which was a gate.

'Now, sir,' said John Jones, 'the way straight forward is the ffordd newydd, and the one on our right hand is the hen ffordd. Which shall we follow, the new or the old?'

'There is a proverb in the Gerniweg,' said I, 'which was the language of my forefathers, saying "ne'er leave the old way for the new," we will therefore go by the hen ffordd.'

'Very good, sir,' said my guide, 'that is the

path I always go, for it is the shortest.' So we turned to the right and followed the old road. Perhaps, however, it would have been well had we gone by the new, for the hen ffordd was a very dull and uninteresting road, whereas the ffordd newydd, as I long subsequently found, is one of the grandest passes in Wales. After we had walked a short distance my guide said, 'Now, sir, if you will turn a little way to the left hand I will show you a house built in the old style, such a house, sir, as I daresay the original turf tavern was.' Then leading me a little way from the road he showed me, under a hollow bank, a small cottage covered with flags.

'That is a house, sir, built yn yr hen dull in the old fashion, of earth, flags and wattles, and in one night. It was the custom of old when a house was to be built, for the people to assemble, and to build it in one night of common materials, close at hand. The custom is not quite dead. I was at the building of this myself, and a merry building it was. The cwrw da passed quickly about among the builders, I assure you.' We returned to the road, and when we had ascended a hill my companion told me that if I looked to the left I should see the Vale of Clwyd.

I looked and perceived an extensive valley pleasantly dotted with trees and farm-houses, and bounded on the west by a range of hills.

'It is a fine valley, sir,' said my guide, 'four miles wide and twenty long, and contains the richest land in all Wales. Cheese made in that

valley, sir, fetches a penny a pound more than cheese made in any other valley.'

'And who owns it?' said I.

'Various are the people who own it, sir, but Sir Watkin owns the greater part.'

We went on, passed by a village called Craig Vychan, where we saw a number of women washing at a fountain, and by a gentle descent soon reached the Vale of Clwyd.

After walking about a mile we left the road and proceeded by a footpath across some meadows. The meadows were green and delightful, and were intersected by a beautiful stream. Trees in abundance were growing about, some of which were oaks. We passed by a little white chapel with a small graveyard before it, which my guide told me belonged to the Baptists, and shortly afterwards reached Ruthyn.

We went to an inn called the Crossed Foxes, where we refreshed ourselves with ale. We then sallied forth to look about, after I had ordered a duck to be got ready for dinner, at three o'clock. Ruthyn stands on a hill above the Clwyd, which in the summer is a mere brook, but in the winter a considerable stream, being then fed with the watery tribute of a hundred hills. About three miles to the north is a range of lofty mountains, dividing the shire of Denbigh from that of Flint, amongst which, almost parallel with the town, and lifting its head high above the rest, is the mighty Moel Vamagh, the mother heap, which I had seen from Chester. Ruthyn is a dull town, but it possessed plenty

of interest for me, for as I strolled with my guide about the streets I remembered that I was treading the ground which the wild bands of Glendower had trod, and where the great struggle commenced which for fourteen years convulsed Wales and for some time shook England to its centre. After I had satisfied myself with wandering about the town we proceeded to the castle.

The original castle suffered terribly in the civil wars; it was held for wretched Charles, and was nearly demolished by the cannon of Cromwell, which were planted on a hill about half a mile distant. The present castle is partly modern and partly ancient. It belongs to a family of the name of W—— who reside in the modern part, and who have the character of being kind, hospitable and intellectual people. We only visited the ancient part, over which we were shown by a woman who, hearing us speaking Welsh, spoke Welsh herself during the whole time she was showing us about. She showed us dark passages, a gloomy apartment in which Welsh kings and great people had been occasionally confined, that strange memorial of the good old times, a drowning pit, and a large prison room, in the middle of which stood a singular-looking column, scrawled with odd characters, which had of yore been used for a whipping-post, another memorial of the good old baronial times so dear to romance readers and minds of sensibility. Amongst other things, which our conductor showed us, was an immense onen or ash; it stood in one of the courts and

measured, as she said, pedwar y haner o ladd yn ei gwmpas, or four yards and a half in girth. As I gazed on the mighty tree I thought of the Asñ Yggdrasill mentioned in the Voluspa, or prophecy of Vola, that venerable poem which contains so much relating to the mythology of the ancient Norse.

We returned to the inn and dined. The duck was capital, and I asked John Jones if he had ever tasted a better. 'Never, sir,' said he, 'for to tell you the truth, I never tasted a duck before.' 'Rather singular,' said I. 'What, that I should not have tasted duck? O sir, the singularity is, that I should now be tasting duck. Duck in Wales, sir, is not fare for poor weavers. This is the first duck I ever tasted, and though I never taste another, as I probably never shall, I may consider myself a fortunate weaver, for I can now say I have tasted duck once in my life. Few weavers in Wales are ever able to say as much.'

CHAPTER XVI

Baptist Tomb-stone—The Toll-bar—Rebecca—The Guitar.

THE sun was fast declining as we left Ruthyn. We retraced our steps across the fields. When we came to the Baptist Chapel, I got over the wall of the little yard to look at the grave-stones. There were only three. The inscriptions upon them were all in Welsh. The following stanza was on the stone of Jane, the daughter of Elizabeth Williams, who died on the second of May 1843 :—

'Er myn'd i'r oerllyd annedd
Dros dymher hir i orwedd,
Cwyd i'r lan o'r gwely bridd
Ac hyfryd fydd ei hagwedd,'

which is

'Though thou art gone to dwelling cold
To lie in mould for many a year,
Thou shalt, at length, from earthy bed,
Uplift thy head to blissful sphere.'

As we went along I stopped to gaze at a singular-looking hill forming part of the mountain range on the east. I asked John Jones what its name was, but he did not know. As we were standing talking about it, a lady came up from the direction in which our course lay. John Jones, touching his hat to her, said :—

'Madam, this gwr boneddig wishes to know the name of that moel, perhaps you can tell him.'

'Its name is Moel Agrik,' said the lady, addressing me in English.

'Does that mean Agricola's hill?' said I.

'It does,' said she, 'and there is a tradition that the Roman general Agricola, when he invaded these parts, pitched his camp on that moel. The hill is spoken of by Pennant.'

'Thank you, madam,' said I; 'perhaps you can tell me the name of the delightful grounds in which we stand, supposing they have a name?'

'They are called Oaklands,' said the lady.

'A very proper name,' said I, 'for there is plenty of oaks growing about. But why are they called by a Saxon name, for Oaklands is Saxon?'

'Because,' said the lady, 'when the grounds were first planted with trees they belonged to an English family.'

'Thank you,' said I, and, taking off my hat, I departed with my guide. I asked him her name, but he could not tell me. Before she was out of sight, however, we met a labourer of whom John Jones inquired her name.

'Her name is W——s,' said the man, 'and a good lady she is.'

'Is she Welsh?' said I.

'Pure Welsh, master,' said the man. 'Purer Welsh flesh and blood need not be.'

Nothing farther worth relating occurred till we reached the toll-bar at the head of the hen ffordd, by which time the sun was almost gone down. We found the master of the gate, his wife and son seated on a bench before the door. The

woman had a large book on her lap, in which she was reading by the last light of the departing orb. I gave the group the sele of the evening in English, which they all returned, the woman looking up from her book.

'Is that volume the Bible?' said I.

'It is, sir,' said the woman.

'May I look at it?' said I.

'Certainly,' said the woman, and placed the book in my hand. It was a magnificent Welsh Bible, but without the title-page.

'That book must be a great comfort to you,' said I to her.

'Very great,' said she. 'I know not what we should do without it in the long winter evenings.'

'Of what faith are you?' said I.

'We are Methodists,' she replied.

'Then you are of the same faith as my friend here,' said I.

'Yes, yes,' said she, 'we are aware of that. We all know honest John Jones.'

After we had left the gate I asked John Jones whether he had ever heard of Rebecca of the toll-gates.

'O yes,' said he; 'I have heard of that chieftainess.'

'And who was she?' said I.

'I cannot say, sir; I never saw her, nor any one who had seen her. Some say that there were a hundred Rebeccas, and all of them men dressed in women's clothes, who went about at night at the head of bands to break the gates.

Ah, sir, something of the kind was almost necessary at that time. I am a friend of peace, sir, no head-breaker, house-breaker, nor gate-breaker, but I can hardly blame what was done at that time, under the name of Rebecca. You have no idea how the poor Welsh were oppressed by those gates, aye, and the rich too. The little people and farmers could not carry their produce to market owing to the exactions at the gates, which devoured all the profit and sometimes more. So that the markets were not half supplied, and people with money could frequently not get what they wanted. Complaints were made to government, which not being attended to, Rebecca and her byddinion made their appearance at night, and broke the gates to pieces with sledge-hammers, and everybody said it was gallant work, everybody save the keepers of the gates and the proprietors. Not only the poor but the rich said so. Aye, and I have heard that many a fine young gentleman had a hand in the work, and went about at night at the head of a band dressed as Rebecca. Well, sir, those breakings were acts of violence, I don't deny, but they did good, for the system is altered; such impositions are no longer practised at gates as were before the time of Rebecca.'

'Were any people ever taken up and punished for those nocturnal breakings?' said I.

'No, sir; and I have heard say that nobody's being taken up was a proof that the rich approved of the work and had a hand in it.'

Night had come on by the time we reached

the foot of the huge hills we had crossed in the morning. We toiled up the ascent and, after crossing the level ground on the top, plunged down the bwlch between walking and running, occasionally stumbling, for we were nearly in complete darkness, and the bwlch was steep and stony. We more than once passed people who gave us the nos da, the hissing night salutation of the Welsh. At length I saw the abbey looming amidst the darkness, and John Jones said that we were just above the fountain. We descended, and putting my head down I drank greedily of the dwr santaidd, my guide following my example. We then proceeded on our way, and in about half-an-hour reached Llangollen. I took John Jones home with me. We had a cheerful cup of tea. Henrietta played on the guitar, and sang a Spanish song, to the great delight of John Jones, who at about ten o'clock departed contented and happy to his own dwelling.

CHAPTER XVII

John Jones and his Bundle—A Good Lady—The Irishman's Dingle—Ab Gwilym and the Mist—The Kitchen—The Two Individuals—The Horse-dealer—I can manage Him—The Mist again.

THE following day was gloomy. In the evening John Jones made his appearance with a bundle under his arm, and an umbrella in his hand.

'Sir,' said he, 'I am going across the mountain with a piece of weaving work, for the man on the other side, who employs me. Perhaps you would like to go with me, as you are fond of walking.'

'I suppose,' said I, 'you wish to have my company for fear of meeting Gwyddelians on the hill.'

John smiled.

'Well, sir,' said he, 'if I do meet them I would sooner be with company than without. But I dare venture by myself, trusting in the Man on High, and perhaps I do wrong to ask you to go, as you must be tired with your walk of yesterday.'

'Hardly more than yourself,' said I. 'Come; I shall be glad to go. What I said about the Gwyddelians was only in jest.'

As we were about to depart John said:

'It does not rain at present, sir, but I think it will. You had better take an umbrella.'

I did so, and away we went. We passed over

the bridge, and turning to the right went by the back of the town through a field. As we passed by the Plas Newydd John Jones said:

'No one lives there now, sir; all dark and dreary; very different from the state of things when the ladies lived there—all gay then and cheerful. I remember the ladies, sir, particularly the last, who lived by herself after her companion died. She was a good lady, and very kind to the poor; when they came to her gate they were never sent away without something to cheer them. She was a grand lady too—kept grand company, and used to be drawn about in a coach by four horses. But she too is gone, and the house is cold and empty; no fire in it, sir; no furniture. There was an auction after her death; and a grand auction it was and lasted four days. O, what a throng of people there was, some of whom came from a great distance to buy the curious things, of which there were plenty.'

We passed over a bridge, which crosses a torrent, which descends from the mountain on the south side of Llangollen, which bridge John Jones told me was called the bridge of the Melin Bac, or mill of the nook, from a mill of that name close by. Continuing our way we came to a glen, down which the torrent comes which passes under the bridge. There was little water in the bed of the torrent, and we crossed easily enough by stepping-stones. I looked up the glen; a wild place enough, its sides overgrown with trees. Dreary and dismal

it looked in the gloom of the closing evening. John Jones said that there was no regular path up it, and that one could only get along by jumping from stone to stone, at the hazard of breaking one's legs. Having passed over the bed of the torrent, we came to a path, which led up the mountain. The path was very steep and stony; the glen with its trees and darkness on our right. We proceeded some way. At length John Jones pointed to a hollow lane on our right, seemingly leading into the glen.

'That place, sir,' said he, 'is called Pant y Gwyddel—the Irishman's dingle, and sometimes Pant Paddy, from the Irish being fond of taking up their quarters there. It was just here, at the entrance of the pant, that the tribe were encamped, when I passed two months ago at night, in returning from the other side of the hill with ten shillings in my pocket, which I had been paid for a piece of my work, which I had carried over the mountain to the very place where I am now carrying this. I shall never forget the fright I was in, both on account of my life, and my ten shillings. I ran down what remained of the hill as fast as I could, not minding the stones. Should I meet a tribe now on my return I shall not run; you will be with me, and I shall not fear for my life nor for my money, which will be now more than ten shillings, provided the man over the hills pays me, as I have no doubt he will.'

As we ascended higher we gradually diverged from the glen, though we did not lose sight of it

till we reached the top of the mountain. The top was nearly level. On our right were a few fields enclosed with stone walls. On our left was an open space, where whin, furze and heath were growing. We passed over the summit, and began to descend by a tolerably good, though steep road. But for the darkness of evening and a drizzling mist, which, for some time past, had been coming on, we should have enjoyed a glorious prospect down into the valley, or perhaps I should say that I should have enjoyed a glorious prospect, for John Jones, like a true mountaineer, cared not a brass farthing for prospects. Even as it was, noble glimpses of wood and rock were occasionally to be obtained. The mist soon wetted us to the skin notwithstanding that we put up our umbrellas. It was a regular Welsh mist, a niwl, like that in which the great poet Ab Gwilym lost his way, whilst trying to keep an assignation with his beloved Morfydd, and which he abuses in the following manner :—

'O ho! thou villain mist, O ho!
What plea hast thou to plague me so?
I scarcely know a scurril name,
But dearly thou deserv'st the same;
Thou exhalation from the deep
Unknown, where ugly spirits keep!
Thou smoke from hellish stews uphurl'd
To mock and mortify the world!
Thou spider-web of giant race,
Spun out and spread through airy space!
Avaunt, thou filthy, clammy thing,
Of sorry rain the source and spring!
Moist blanket dripping misery down,
Loathed alike by land and town!

Thou watery monster, wan to see,
Intruding 'twixt the sun and me,
To rob me of my blessed right,
To turn my day to dismal night.
Parent of thieves and patron best,
They brave pursuit within thy breast!
Mostly from thee its merciless snow
Grim January doth glean, I trow.
Pass off with speed, thou prowler pale,
Holding along o'er hill and dale,
Spilling a noxious spittle round,
Spoiling the fairies' sporting ground!
Move off to hell, mysterious haze;
Wherein deceitful meteors blaze;
Thou wild of vapour, vast, o'ergrown,
Huge as the ocean of unknown.'

As we descended, the path became more steep; it was particularly so at a part where it was overshadowed with trees on both sides. Here finding walking very uncomfortable, my knees suffering much, I determined to run. So shouting to John Jones, 'Nis gallav gerdded rhaid rhedeg,' I set off running down the pass. My companion followed close behind, and luckily meeting no mischance, we presently found ourselves on level ground, amongst a collection of small houses. On our turning a corner a church appeared on our left hand on the slope of the hill. In the churchyard, and close to the road, grew a large yew-tree which flung its boughs far on every side. John Jones stopping by the tree said, that if I looked over the wall of the yard I should see the tomb of a Lord Dungannon, who had been a great benefactor to the village. I looked, and through the lower branches of the yew,

which hung over part of the churchyard, I saw what appeared to be a mausoleum. Jones told me that in the church also there was the tomb of a great person of the name of Tyrwhitt.

We passed on by various houses till we came nearly to the bottom of the valley. Jones then pointing to a large house, at a little distance on the right, told me that it was a good gwesty, and advised me to go and refresh myself in it, whilst he went and carried home his work to the man who employed him, who, he said, lived in a farm-house a few hundred yards off. I asked him where we were.

'At Llyn Ceiriog,' he replied.

I then asked if we were near Pont Fadog; and received for answer that Pont Fadog was a good way down the valley, to the north-east, and that we could not see it owing to a hill which intervened.

Jones went his way and I proceeded to the gwestfa, the door of which stood invitingly open. I entered a large kitchen, at one end of which a good fire was burning in a grate, in front of which was a long table, and a high settle on either side. Everything looked very comfortable. There was nobody in the kitchen: on my calling, however, a girl came whom I bade in Welsh to bring me a pint of the best ale. The girl stared, but went away apparently to fetch it—presently came the landlady, a good-looking middle-aged woman. I saluted her in Welsh and then asked her if she could speak English. She replied 'Tipyn bach,' which interpreted, is, a little bit.

I soon, however, found that she could speak it very passably, for two men coming in from the rear of the house, she conversed with them in English. These two individuals seated themselves on chairs near the door, and called for beer. The girl brought in the ale, and I sat down by the fire, poured myself out a glass, and made myself comfortable. Presently a gig drove up to the door, and in came a couple of dogs, one a tall black greyhound, the other a large female setter, the coat of the latter dripping with rain, and shortly after two men from the gig entered; one who appeared to be the principal was a stout bluff-looking person between fifty and sixty, dressed in a grey stuff coat and with a slouched hat on his head. This man bustled much about, and in a broad Yorkshire dialect ordered a fire to be lighted in another room, and a chamber to be prepared for him and his companion; the landlady, who appeared to know him, and to treat him with a kind of deference, asked if she should prepare two beds; whereupon he answered 'No! As we came together, and shall start together, so shall we sleep together; it will not be for the first time.'

His companion was a small mean-looking man, dressed in a black coat, and behaved to him with no little respect. Not only the landlady, but the two men, of whom I have previously spoken, appeared to know him and to treat him with deference. He and his companion presently went out to see after the horse. After a little time they returned, and the stout man called

lustily for two fourpennyworths of brandy and water—'Take it into the other room!' said he, and went into a side room with his companion, but almost immediately came out saying that the room smoked and was cold, and that he preferred sitting in the kitchen. He then took his seat near me and, when the brandy was brought, drank to my health. I said thank you, but nothing farther. He then began talking to the men and his companion upon indifferent subjects. After a little time John Jones came in, called for a glass of ale, and at my invitation seated himself between me and the stout personage. The latter addressed him roughly in English, but receiving no answer, said, 'Ah, you no understand. You have no English and I no Welsh.'

'You have not mastered Welsh yet, Mr. ——,' said one of the men to him.

'No!' said he: 'I have been doing business with the Welsh forty years, but can't speak a word of their language. I sometimes guess at a word, spoken in the course of business, but am never sure.'

Presently John Jones began talking to me, saying that he had been to the river, that the water was very low, and that there was little but stones in the bed of the stream.

I told him if its name was Ceiriog no wonder there were plenty of stones in it, Ceiriog being derived from Cerrig, a rock. The men stared to hear me speak Welsh.

'Is the gentleman a Welshman?' said one of

the men, near the door, to his companion; 'he seems to speak Welsh very well.'

'How should I know?' said the other, who appeared to be a low working-man.

'Who are those people?' said I to John Jones.

'The smaller man is a workman at a flannel manufactory,' said Jones. 'The other I do not exactly know.'

'And who is the man on the other side of you?' said I.

'I believe he is an English dealer in gigs and horses,' replied Jones, 'and that he is come here either to buy or sell.'

The man, however, soon put me out of all doubt with respect to his profession.

'I was at Chirk,' said he, 'and Mr. So-and-so asked me to have a look at his new gig and horse, and have a ride. I consented. They were both brought out—everything new: gig new, harness new, and horse new. Mr. So-and-so asked me what I thought of his turn-out. I gave a look and said, "I like the car very well, harness very well, but I don't like the horse at all; a regular bolter, rearer and kicker, or I 'm no judge; moreover, he 's pigeon-toed." However, we all got on the car—four of us, and I was of course complimented with the ribbons. Well, we hadn't gone fifty yards before the horse, to make my words partly good, began to kick like a new 'un. However, I managed him, and he went on for a couple of miles till we got to the top of the hill, just above the descent with the precipice on the right hand. Here he began to rear like a very devil.

'"O dear me!" says Mr. So-and-so; "let me get out!"

'"Keep where you are," says I, "I can manage him."

'However, Mr. So-and-so would not be ruled, and got out; coming down, not on his legs, but his hands and knees. And then the two others said:—

'"Let us get out!"

'"Keep where you are," said I, "I can manage him."

'But they must needs get out, or rather tumble out, for they both came down on the road hard on their backs.

'"Get out yourself," said they all, "and let the devil go, or you are a done man."

'"Getting out may do for you young hands," says I, "but it won't do for I; neither my back nor bones will stand the hard road."

'Mr. So-and-so ran to the horse's head.

'"Are you mad?" says I, "if you try to hold him he 'll be over the pree-si-pice in a twinkling, and then where am I? Give him head; I can manage him."

'So Mr. So-and-so got out of the way, and down flew the horse right down the descent, as fast as he could gallop. I tell you what, I didn't half like it! A pree-si-pice on my right, the rock on my left, and a devil before me, going, like a cannon-ball, right down the hill. However, I contrived, as I said I would, to manage him; kept the car from the rock and from the edge of the gulf too. Well, just when we had come

to the bottom of the hill out comes the people running from the inn, almost covering the road.

'"Now get out of the way," I shouts, "if you don't wish to see your brains knocked out, and what would be worse, mine too."

'So they gets out of the way, and on I spun, I and my devil. But by this time I had nearly taken the devil out of him. Well, he hadn't gone fifty yards on the level ground, when, what do you think he did? why, went regularly over, tumbled down regularly on the road, even as I knew he would some time or other, because why? he was pigeon-toed. Well, I gets out of the gig, and no sooner did Mr. So-and-so come up than I says:

'"I likes your car very well, and I likes your harness, but —— me if I likes your horse, and it will be some time before you persuade me to drive him again."'

I am a great lover of horses, and an admirer of good driving, and should have wished to have some conversation with this worthy person about horses and their management. I should also have wished to ask him some questions about Wales and the Welsh, as he must have picked up a great deal of curious information about both in his forty years' traffic, notwithstanding he did not know a word of Welsh, but John Jones prevented my farther tarrying by saying, that it would be as well to get over the mountain before it was entirely dark. So I got up, paid for my ale, vainly endeavoured to pay for that of my companion who insisted upon paying for what

he had ordered, made a general bow and departed from the house, leaving the horse-dealer and the rest staring at each other and wondering who we were, or at least who I was. We were about to ascend the hill when John Jones asked me whether I should not like to see the bridge and the river. I told him I should. The bridge and the river presented nothing remarkable. The former was of a single arch; and the latter anything but abundant in its flow.

We now began to retrace our steps over the mountain. At first the mist appeared to be nearly cleared away. As we proceeded, however, large sheets began to roll up the mountain sides, and by the time we reached the summit we were completely shrouded in vapour. The night, however, was not very dark, and we found our way tolerably well, though once in descending I had nearly tumbled into the nant or dingle, now on our left hand. The bushes and trees, seen indistinctly through the mist, had something the look of goblins, and brought to my mind the elves, which Ab Gwilym of old saw, or thought he saw, in a somewhat similar situation :—

> 'In every hollow dingle stood
> Of wry-mouth'd elves a wrathful brood.'

Drenched to the skin, but uninjured in body and limb, we at length reached Llangollen.

CHAPTER XVIII

Venerable Old Gentleman—Surnames in Wales—Russia and Britain—Church of England—Yriarte—The Eagle and his Young—Poets of the Gael—The Oxonian—Master Salisburie.

My wife had told me that she had had some conversation upon the Welsh language and literature with a venerable old man, who kept a shop in the town, that she had informed him that I was very fond of both, and that he had expressed a great desire to see me. One afternoon I said: 'Let us go and pay a visit to your old friend of the shop. I think from two or three things which you have told me about him, that he must be worth knowing.' We set out. She conducted me across the bridge a little way; then presently turning to the left into the principal street, she entered the door of a shop on the left-hand side, over the top of which was written: 'Jones, Provision Dealer and General Merchant.' The shop was small, with two little counters, one on each side. Behind one was a young woman, and behind the other a venerable-looking old man.

'I have brought my husband to visit you,' said my wife, addressing herself to him.

'I am most happy to see him,' said the old gentleman, making me a polite bow.

He then begged that we would do him the

honour to walk into his parlour, and led us into a little back-room, the window of which looked out upon the Dee a few yards below the bridge. On the left side of the room was a large case, well stored with books. He offered us chairs, and we all sat down. I was much struck with the old man. He was rather tall, and somewhat inclined to corpulency. His hair was grey; his forehead high; his nose aquiline; his eyes full of intelligence; whilst his manners were those of a perfect gentleman. I entered into conversation by saying that I supposed his name was Jones, as I had observed that name over the door.

'Jones is the name I bear at your service, sir,' he replied.

I said that it was a very common name in Wales, as I knew several people who bore it, and observed that most of the surnames in Wales appeared to be modifications of Christian names; for example, Jones, Roberts, Edwards, Humphreys, and likewise Pugh, Powel and Probert, which were nothing more than the son of Hugh, the son of Howel, and the son of Robert. He said I was right, that there were very few real surnames in Wales; that the three great families, however, had real surnames; for that Wynn, Morgan and Bulkley were all real surnames. I asked him whether the Bulkleys of Anglesea were not originally an English family. He said they were, and that they settled down in Anglesea in the time of Elizabeth.

After some minutes my wife got up and left

us. The old gentleman and I had then some discourse in Welsh; we soon, however, resumed speaking English. We got on the subject of Welsh bards, and after a good deal of discourse the old gentleman said:

'You seem to know something about Welsh poetry; can you tell me who wrote the following line?

"There will be great doings in Britain, and I shall have no concern in them."'

'I will not be positive,' said I, 'but I think from its tone and tenor that it was composed by Merddyn, whom my countrymen call Merlin.'

'I believe you are right,' said the old gentleman, 'I see you know something of Welsh poetry. I met the line, a long time ago, in a Welsh grammar. It then made a great impression upon me, and of late it has always been ringing in my ears. I love Britain. Britain has just engaged in a war with a mighty country, and I am apprehensive of the consequences. I am old, upwards of fourscore, and shall probably not live to see the evil, if evil happens, as I fear it will—"There will be strange doings in Britain, but they will not concern me." I cannot get the line out of my head.'

I told him that the line probably related to the progress of the Saxons in Britain, but that I did not wonder that it made an impression upon him at the present moment. I said, however, that we ran no risk from Russia; that the only power at all dangerous to Britain was France, which though at present leagued with

her against Russia, would eventually go to war with and strive to subdue her, and then of course Britain could expect no help from Russia, her old friend and ally, who, if Britain had not outraged her, would have assisted her, in any quarrel or danger, with four or five hundred thousand men. I said that I hoped neither he nor I should see a French invasion, but I had no doubt one would eventually take place, and that then Britain must fight stoutly, as she had no one to expect help from but herself; that I wished she might be able to hold her own, but——

'Strange things will happen in Britain, though they will concern me nothing,' said the old gentleman with a sigh.

On my expressing a desire to know something of his history, he told me that he was the son of a small farmer, who resided at some distance from Llangollen; that he lost his father at an early age, and was obliged to work hard, even when a child, in order to assist his mother who had some difficulty, after the death of his father, in keeping things together; that though he was obliged to work hard he had been fond of study, and used to pore over Welsh and English books by the glimmering light of the turf fire at night, for that his mother could not afford to allow him anything in the shape of a candle to read by; that at his mother's death he left rural labour, and coming to Llangollen, commenced business in the little shop in which he was at present; that he had been married, and had children, but that his wife and family were

dead; that the young woman whom I had seen in the shop, and who took care of his house, was a relation of his wife; that though he had always been attentive to business, he had never abandoned study; that he had mastered his own language, of which he was passionately fond, and had acquired a good knowledge of English and of some other languages. That his fondness for literature had shortly after his arrival at Llangollen attracted the notice of some of the people, who encouraged him in his studies, and assisted him by giving him books; that the two celebrated ladies of Llangollen had particularly noticed him; that he held the situation of church clerk for upwards of forty years, and that it was chiefly owing to the recommendation of the 'great ladies' that he had obtained it. He then added with a sigh, that about ten years ago he was obliged to give it up, owing to something the matter with his eyesight, which prevented him from reading, and that his being obliged to give it up was a source of bitter grief to him, as he had always considered it a high honour to be permitted to assist in the service of the Church of England, in the principles of which he had been bred, and in whose doctrines he firmly believed.

Here shaking him by the hand, I said that I too had been bred up in the principles of the Church of England; that I too firmly believed in its doctrines, and would maintain with my blood, if necessary, that there was not such another church in the world.

'So would I,' said the old gentleman; 'where is there a church in whose liturgy there is so much Scripture as in that of the Church of England?'

'Pity,' said I, 'that so many traitors have lately sprung up in its ministry.'

'If it be so,' said the old church clerk, 'they have not yet shown themselves in the pulpit at Llangollen. All the clergymen who have held the living in my time have been excellent. The present incumbent is a model of a Church of England clergyman. O how I regret that the state of my eyes prevents me from officiating as clerk beneath him.'

I told him that I should never from the appearance of his eyes have imagined that they were not excellent ones.

'I can see to walk about with them, and to distinguish objects,' said the old gentleman; 'but see to read with them I cannot. Even with the help of the most powerful glasses I cannot distinguish a letter. I believe I strained my eyes at a very early age, when striving to read at night by the glimmer of the turf fire in my poor mother's chimney corner. O what an affliction is this state of my eyes! I can't turn my books to any account, nor read the newspapers; but I repeat that I chiefly lament it because it prevents me from officiating as under-preacher.'

He showed me his books. Seeing amongst them 'The Fables of Yriarte' in Spanish, I asked how they came into his possession.

'They were presented to me,' said he, 'by one of the ladies of Llangollen, Lady Eleanor Butler.'

'Have you ever read them?' said I.

'No,' he replied; 'I do not understand a word of Spanish; but I suppose her ladyship, knowing I was fond of languages, thought that I might one day set about learning Spanish and that then they might be useful to me.'

He then asked me if I knew Spanish, and on my telling him that I had some knowledge of that language, he asked me to translate some of the fables. I translated two of them, which pleased him much.

I then asked if he had ever heard of a collection of Welsh fables compiled about the year thirteen hundred. He said that he had not, and inquired whether they had ever been printed. I told him that some had appeared in the old Welsh magazine called 'The Greal.'

'I wish you would repeat one of them,' said the old clerk.

'Here is one,' said I, 'which particularly struck me:—

'It is the custom of the eagle, when his young are sufficiently old, to raise them up above his nest in the direction of the sun; and the bird which has strength enough of eye to look right in the direction of the sun, he keeps and nourishes, but the one which has not, he casts down into the gulf to its destruction. So does the Lord deal with His children in the Catholic Church Militant: those whom He sees worthy to serve

Him in godliness and spiritual goodness He keeps with Him and nourishes, but those who are not worthy from being addicted to earthly things He casts out into utter darkness, where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth.'

The old gentleman after a moment's reflection said it was a clever fable, but an unpleasant one. It was hard for poor birds to be flung into a gulf for not having power of eye sufficient to look full in the face of the sun, and likewise hard that poor human creatures should be lost for ever, for not doing that which they had no power to do.

'Perhaps,' said I, 'the eagle does not deal with his chicks, or the Lord with His creatures as the fable represents.'

'Let us hope at any rate,' said the old gentleman, 'that the Lord does not.'

'Have you ever seen this book?' said he, and put Smith's 'Sean Dana' into my hand.

'O yes,' said I, 'and have gone through it. It contains poems in the Gaelic language by Oisin and others, collected in the Highlands. I went through it a long time ago with great attention. Some of the poems are wonderfully beautiful.'

'They are so,' said the old clerk. 'I too have gone through the book; it was presented to me a great many years ago by a lady to whom I gave some lessons in the Welsh language. I went through it with the assistance of a Gaelic grammar and dictionary which she also presented to me, and I was struck with the high tone of the poetry.'

'This collection is valuable indeed,' said I; 'it contains poems, which not only possess the highest merit, but serve to confirm the authenticity of the poems of Ossian, published by Macpherson, so often called in question. All the pieces here attributed to Ossian are written in the same metre, tone and spirit as those attributed to him in the other collection, so if Macpherson's Ossianic poems, which he said were collected by him in the Highlands, are forgeries, Smith's Ossianic poems, which according to his account were also collected in the Highlands, must be also forged, and have been imitated from those published by the other. Now as it is well known that Smith did not possess sufficient poetic power to produce any imitation of Macpherson's Ossian with a tenth part the merit which the 'Sean Dana' possess, and that even if he had possessed it, his principles would not have allowed him to attempt to deceive the world by imposing forgeries upon it, as the authentic poems of another, he being a highly respectable clergyman, the necessary conclusion is that the Ossianic poems which both published are genuine, and collected in the manner in which both stated they were.'

After a little more discourse about Ossian the old gentleman asked me if there was any good modern Gaelic poetry. 'None very modern,' said I: 'the last great poets of the Gael were Macintyre and Buchanan, who flourished about the middle of the last century. The first sang of love and of Highland scenery; the latter was

a religious poet. The best piece of Macintyre is an ode to Ben Dourain, or the Hill of the Water-dogs—a mountain in the Highlands. The masterpiece of Buchanan is his La Breitheanas or Day of Judgment, which is equal in merit, or nearly so, to the Cywydd y Farn, or Judgment Day of your own immortal Gronwy Owen. Singular that the two best pieces on the Day of Judgment should have been written in two Celtic dialects, and much about the same time; but such is the fact.'

'Really,' said the old church clerk, 'you seem to know something of Celtic literature.'

'A little,' said I; 'I am a bit of a philologist; and when studying languages dip a little into the literature which they contain.'

As I had heard him say that he had occasionally given lessons in the Welsh language, I inquired whether any of his pupils had made much progress in it. 'The generality,' said he, 'soon became tired of its difficulties, and gave it up without making any progress at all. Two or three got on tolerably well. One, however, acquired it in a time so short that it might be deemed marvellous. He was an Oxonian, and came down with another in the vacation in order to study hard against the yearly collegiate examination. He and his friend took lodgings at Pengwern Hall, then a farm-house, and studied and walked about for some time, as other young men from college, who come down here, are in the habit of doing. One day he and his friend came to me, who was then clerk, and

desired to see the interior of the church. So I took the key and went with them into the church. When he came to the altar he took up the large Welsh Common Prayer-Book which was lying there and looked into it.

'"A curious language this Welsh," said he; "I should like to learn it."

'"Many have wished to learn it, without being able," said I; "it is no easy language."

'"I should like to try," he replied; "I wish I could find some one who would give me a few lessons."

'"I have occasionally given instructions in Welsh," said I, "and shall be happy to oblige you."

'Well, it was agreed that he should take lessons of me; and to my house he came every evening, and I gave him what instructions I could. I was astonished at his progress. He acquired the pronunciation in a lesson, and within a week was able to construe and converse. By the time he left Llangollen, and he was not here in all more than two months, he understood the Welsh Bible as well as I did, and could speak Welsh so well that the Welsh, who did not know him, took him to be one of themselves, for he spoke the language with the very tone and manner of a native. O, he was the cleverest man for language that I ever knew; not a word that he heard did he ever forget.'

'Just like Mezzofanti,' said I, 'the great cardinal philologist. But whilst learning Welsh, did he not neglect his collegiate studies?'

'Well, I was rather apprehensive on that point,' said the old gentleman, 'but mark the event. At the examination he came off most brilliantly in Latin, Greek, mathematics, and other things too; in fact, a double first-class man, as I think they call it.'

'I never heard of so extraordinary an individual, said I. 'I could no more have done what you say he did, than I could have taken wings and flown. Pray, what was his name?'

'His name,' said the old gentleman, 'was Earl.'

I was much delighted with my new acquaintance, and paid him frequent visits; the more I saw him the more he interested me. He was kind and benevolent, a good old Church of England Christian, was well versed in several dialects of the Celtic, and possessed an astonishing deal of Welsh heraldic and antiquarian lore. Often whilst discoursing with him I almost fancied that I was with Master Salisburie, Vaughan of Hengwrt, or some other worthy of old, deeply skilled in everything remarkable connected with wild 'Camber's Lande.'

CHAPTER XIX

The Vicar and his Family—Evan Evans—Foaming Ale—Llam y Lleidyr—Baptism—Joost Van Vondel—Over to Rome—The Miller's Man—Welsh and English.

We had received a call from the Vicar of Llangollen and his lady; we had returned it, and they had done us the kindness to invite us to take tea with them. On the appointed evening we went, myself, wife and Henrietta, and took tea with the vicar and his wife, their sons and daughters, all delightful and amiable beings—the eldest son a fine intelligent young man from Oxford, lately admitted into the Church, and now assisting his father in his sacred office. A delightful residence was the vicarage, situated amongst trees in the neighbourhood of the Dee. A large open window in the room, in which our party sat, afforded us a view of a green plat on the top of a bank running down to the Dee, part of the river, the steep farther bank covered with umbrageous trees, and a high mountain beyond, even that of Pen y Coed clad with wood. During tea Mr. E. and I had a great deal of discourse. I found him to be a first-rate Greek and Latin scholar, and also a proficient in the poetical literature of his own country. In the course of discourse he repeated some noble lines of Evan Evans, the unfortunate and eccentric Prydydd Hir, or tall poet, the

friend and correspondent of Gray, for whom he made literal translations from the Welsh, which the great English genius afterwards wrought into immortal verse.

'I have a great regard for poor Evan Evans,' said Mr. E., after he had finished repeating the lines, 'for two reasons: first, because he was an illustrious genius, and second, because he was a South-Wallian like myself.'

'And I,' I replied, 'because he was a great poet, and like myself fond of a glass of cwrw da.'

Some time after tea the younger Mr. E. and myself took a walk in an eastern direction along a path cut in the bank, just above the stream. After proceeding a little way amongst most romantic scenery I asked my companion if he had ever heard of the pool of Catherine Lingo—the deep pool, as the reader will please to remember, of which John Jones had spoken.

'O yes,' said young Mr. E.: 'my brothers and myself are in the habit of bathing there almost every morning. We will go to it if you please.'

We proceeded, and soon came to the pool. The pool is a beautiful sheet of water, seemingly about one hundred and fifty yards in length, by about seventy in width. It is bounded on the east by a low ridge of rocks forming a weir. The banks on both sides are high and precipitous, and covered with trees, some of which shoot their arms for some way above the face of the pool. This is said to be the deepest pool in the whole course of the Dee, varying in depth from

twenty to thirty feet. Enormous pike, called in Welsh penhwiaid, or ducks-heads, from the similarity which the head of a pike bears to that of a duck, are said to be tenants of this pool.

We returned to the vicarage and at about ten we all sat down to supper. On the supper-table was a mighty pitcher full of foaming ale.

'There,' said my excellent host, as he poured me out a glass, 'there is a glass of cwrw, which Evan Evans himself might have drunk.'

One evening my wife, Henrietta and myself, attended by John Jones, went upon the Berwyn a little to the east of the Geraint or Barber's Hill to botanize. Here we found a fern which John Jones called Coed llus y Brân, or the plant of the Crow's berry. There was a hard kind of berry upon it, of which he said the crows were exceedingly fond. We also discovered two or three other strange plants, the Welsh names of which our guide told us, and which were curious and descriptive enough. He took us home by a romantic path which we had never before seen, and on our way pointed out to us a small house in which he said he was born.

The day after, finding myself on the banks of the Dee in the upper part of the valley, I determined to examine the Llam Lleidyr or Robber's Leap, which I had heard spoken of on a former occasion. A man passing near me with a cart, I asked him where the Robber's Leap was. I spoke in English, and with a shake of his head he replied 'Dim Sæsneg.' On my putting the

question to him in Welsh, however, his countenance brightened up.

'Dyna Llam Lleidyr, sir!' said he, pointing to a very narrow part of the stream a little way down.

'And did the thief take it from this side?' I demanded.

'Yes, sir, from this side,' replied the man.

I thanked him and passing over the dry part of the river's bed came to the Llam Lleidyr. The whole water of the Dee in the dry season gurgles here through a passage not more than four feet across, which, however, is evidently profoundly deep, as the water is as dark as pitch. If the thief ever took the leap he must have taken it in the dry season, for in the wet the Dee is a wide and roaring torrent. Yet even in the dry season it is difficult to conceive how anybody could take this leap, for on the other side is a rock rising high above the dark gurgling stream. On observing the opposite side, however, narrowly, I perceived that there was a small hole a little way up the rock, in which it seemed possible to rest one's foot for a moment. So I supposed that if the leap was ever taken, the individual who took it darted the tip of his foot into the hole, then springing up seized the top of the rock with his hands, and scrambled up. From either side the leap must have been a highly dangerous one—from the farther side the leaper would incur the almost certain risk of breaking his legs on a ledge of hard rock, from this of falling back into the deep horrible stream,

which would probably suck him down in a moment.

From the Llam y Lleidyr I went to the canal and walked along it till I came to the house of the old man who sold coals, and who had put me in mind of Smollett's Morgan; he was now standing in his little coal-yard, leaning over the pales. I had spoken to him on two or three occasions subsequent to the one on which I made his acquaintance, and had been every time more and more struck with the resemblance which his ways and manners bore to those of Smollett's character, on which account I shall call him Morgan, though such was not his name. He now told me that he expected that I should build a villa and settle down in the neighbourhood, as I seemed so fond of it. After a little discourse, induced either by my questions or from a desire to talk about himself, he related to me his history, which, though not one of the most wonderful, I shall repeat. He was born near Aberdarron in Caernarvonshire, and in order to make me understand the position of the place, and its bearing with regard to some other places, he drew marks in the coal-dust on the earth. His father was a Baptist minister, who, when Morgan was about six years of age, went to live at Canol Lyn, a place at some little distance from Port Heli. With his father he continued till he was old enough to gain his own maintenance, when he went to serve a farmer in the neighbourhood. Having saved some money young Morgan departed to the foundries

at Cefn Mawr, at which he worked thirty years, with an interval of four, which he had passed partly in working in slate quarries, and partly upon the canal. About four years before the present time he came to where he now lived, where he commenced selling coals, at first on his own account and subsequently for some other person. He concluded his narration by saying that he was now sixty-two years of age, was afflicted with various disorders, and believed that he was breaking up.

Such was Morgan's history; certainly not a very remarkable one. Yet Morgan was a most remarkable individual, as I shall presently make appear.

Rather affected at the bad account he gave me of his health I asked him if he felt easy in his mind? He replied perfectly so, and when I inquired how he came to feel so comfortable, he said that his feeling so was owing to his baptism into the faith of Christ Jesus. On my telling him that I too had been baptized, he asked me if I had been dipped; and on learning that I had not, but only been sprinkled, according to the practice of my church, he gave me to understand that my baptism was not worth three halfpence. Feeling rather nettled at hearing the baptism of my church so undervalued, I stood up for it, and we were soon in a dispute, in which I got rather the worst, for though he spuffled and sputtered in a most extraordinary manner, and spoke in a dialect which was neither Welsh, English nor Cheshire, but a mixture of all three,

he said two or three things rather difficult to be got over. Finding that he had nearly silenced me, he observed that he did not deny that I had a good deal of book learning, but that in matters of baptism I was as ignorant as the rest of the people of the church were, and had always been. He then said that many church people had entered into argument with him on the subject of baptism, but that he had got the better of them all; that Mr. P., the minister of the parish of L., in which we then were, had frequently entered into argument with him, but quite unsuccessfully, and had at last given up the matter as a bad job. He added that a little time before, as Mr. P. was walking close to the canal with his wife and daughter and a spaniel dog, Mr. P. suddenly took up the dog and flung it in, giving it a good ducking, whereupon he, Morgan, cried out: 'Dyna y gwir vedydd! That is the right baptism, sir! I thought I should bring you to it at last!' at which words Mr. P. laughed heartily, but made no particular reply.

After a little time he began to talk about the great men who had risen up amongst the Baptists, and mentioned two or three distinguished individuals.

I said that he had not mentioned the greatest man who had been born amongst the Baptists.

'What was his name?' said he.

'His name was Joost Van Vondel,' I replied.

'I never heard of him before,' said Morgan.

'Very probably,' said I: 'he was born, bred, and died in Holland.'

'Has he been dead long?' said Morgan.

'About two hundred years,' said I.

'That's a long time,' said Morgan, 'and maybe is the reason that I never heard of him. So he was a great man?'

'He was indeed,' said I. 'He was not only the greatest man that ever sprang up amongst the Baptists, but the greatest, and by far the greatest, that Holland ever produced, though Holland has produced a great many illustrious men.'

'O, I daresay he was a great man if he was a Baptist,' said Morgan. 'Well, it's strange I never read of him. I thought I had read the lives of all the eminent people who lived and died in our communion.'

'He did not die in the Baptist communion,' said I.

'O, he didn't die in it,' said Morgan. 'What, did he go over to the Church of England? a pretty fellow!'

'He did not go over to the Church of England,' said I, 'for the Church of England does not exist in Holland; he went over to the Church of Rome.'

'Well, that's not quite so bad,' said Morgan; 'however, it's bad enough. I daresay he was a pretty blackguard.'

'No,' said I: 'he was a pure virtuous character, and perhaps the only pure and virtuous character that ever went over to Rome. The only wonder is that so good a man could ever have gone over to so detestable a church; but he appears to have been deluded.'

'Deluded indeed!' said Morgan. 'However, I suppose he went over for advancement's sake.'

'No,' said I; 'he lost every prospect of advancement by going over to Rome: nine-tenths of his countrymen were of the reformed religion, and he endured much poverty and contempt by the step he took.'

'How did he support himself?' said Morgan.

'He obtained a livelihood,' said I, 'by writing poems and plays, some of which are wonderfully fine.'

'What,' said Morgan, 'a writer of Interludes? One of Twm o'r Nant's gang! I thought he would turn out a pretty fellow.' I told him that the person in question certainly did write Interludes, for example 'Noah,' and 'Joseph at Goshen,' but that he was a highly respectable, nay venerable character.

'If he was a writer of Interludes,' said Morgan, 'he was a blackguard; there never yet was a writer of Interludes, or a person who went about playing them, that was not a scamp. He might be a clever man, I don't say he was not. Who was a cleverer man than Twm o'r Nant with his 'Pleasure and Care' and 'Riches and Poverty,' but where was there a greater blackguard? Why, not in all Wales. And if you knew this other fellow—what 's his name—Fondle's history, you would find that he was not a bit more respectable than Twm o'r Nant, and not half so clever. As for his leaving the Baptists I don't believe a word of it; he was turned out of the connection, and then went about the country

saying he left it. No Baptist connection would ever have a writer of Interludes in it, not Twm o'r Nant himself, unless he left his ales and Interludes and wanton hussies, for the three things are sure to go together. You say he went over to the Church of Rome; of course he did, if the Church of England were not at hand to receive him, where should he go to but to Rome? No respectable church like the Methodist or the Independent would have received him. There are only two churches in the world that will take in anybody without asking questions, and will never turn them out however bad they may behave; the one is the Church of Rome, and the other the Church of Canterbury; and if you look into the matter you will find that every rogue, rascal and hanged person since the world began has belonged to one or other of those communions.'

In the evening I took a walk with my wife and daughter past the Plas Newydd. Coming to the little mill called the Melyn Bac, at the bottom of the gorge, we went into the yard to observe the water-wheel. We found that it was turned by a very little water, which was conveyed to it by artificial means. Seeing the miller's man, a short dusty figure, standing in the yard, I entered into conversation with him, and found to my great surprise that he had a considerable acquaintance with the ancient language. On my repeating to him verses from Taliesin he understood them, and to show me that he did, translated some of the lines into English. Two

or three respectable-looking lads, probably the miller's sons, came out and listened to us. One of them said we were both good Welshmen. After a little time the man asked me if I had heard of Huw Morris. I told him that I was well acquainted with his writings, and enquired whether the place in which he had lived was not somewhere in the neighbourhood. He said it was; and that it was over the mountains not far from Llan Sanfraid. I asked whether it was not called Pont y Meibion. He answered in the affirmative, and added that he had himself been there, and had sat in Huw Morris's stone chair, which was still to be seen by the road's side. I told him that I hoped to visit the place in a few days. He replied that I should be quite right in doing so, and that no one should come to these parts without visiting Pont y Meibion, for that Huw Morris was one of the columns of the Cumry.

'What a difference,' said I to my wife, after we had departed, 'between a Welshman and an Englishman of the lower class. What would a Suffolk miller's swain have said if I had repeated to him verses out of Beowulf or even Chaucer, and had asked him about the residence of Skelton?'

CHAPTER XX

Huw Morris—Immortal Elegy—The Valley of Ceiriog—Tangled Wilderness—Perplexity—Chair of Huw Morris—The Walking-stick—Huw's Descendant—Pont y Meibion.

Two days after the last adventure I set off, over the Berwyn, to visit the birthplace of Huw Morris under the guidance of John Jones, who was well acquainted with the spot.

Huw Morus, or Morris, was born in the year 1622 on the banks of the Ceiriog. His life was a long one, for he died at the age of eighty-four, after living in six reigns. He was the second son of a farmer, and was apprenticed to a tanner, with whom, however, he did not stay till the expiration of the term of his apprenticeship, for not liking the tanning art, he speedily returned to the house of his father, whom he assisted in husbandry till death called the old man away. He then assisted his elder brother, and on his elder brother's death, lived with his son. He did not distinguish himself as a husbandman, and appears never to have been fond of manual labour. At an early period, however, he applied himself most assiduously to poetry, and before he had attained the age of thirty was celebrated, throughout Wales, as the best poet of his time. When the war broke out between Charles and his Parliament, Huw espoused the part of the King, not as a

soldier, for he appears to have liked fighting little better than tanning or husbandry, but as a poet, and probably did the King more service in that capacity than he would if he had raised him a troop of horse, or a regiment of foot, for he wrote songs breathing loyalty to Charles, and fraught with pungent satire against his foes, which ran like wild-fire through Wales, and had a great influence on the minds of the people. Even when the royal cause was lost in the field, he still carried on a poetical war against the successful party, but not so openly as before, dealing chiefly in allegories, which, however, were easy to be understood. Strange to say the Independents, when they had the upper hand, never interfered with him though they persecuted certain Royalist poets of far inferior note. On the accession of Charles the Second he celebrated the event by a most singular piece called the 'Lamentation of Oliver's Men,' in which he assails the Roundheads with the most bitter irony. He was loyal to James the Second, till that monarch attempted to overthrow the Church of England, when Huw, much to his credit, turned against him, and wrote songs in the interest of the glorious Prince of Orange. He died in the reign of good Queen Anne. In his youth his conduct was rather dissolute, but irreproachable and almost holy in his latter days—a kind of halo surrounded his old brow. It was the custom in those days in North Wales for the congregation to leave the church in a row with the clergyman at their head, but so great was the estimation in

which old Huw was universally held, for the purity of his life and his poetical gift, that the clergyman of the parish, abandoning his claim to precedence, always insisted on the good and inspired old man's leading the file, himself following immediately in his rear. Huw wrote on various subjects, mostly in common and easily understood measures. He was great in satire, great in humour, but when he pleased could be greater in pathos than in either; for his best piece is an elegy on Barbara Middleton, the sweetest song of the kind ever written. From his being born on the banks of the brook Ceiriog, and from the flowing melody of his awen or muse, his countrymen were in the habit of calling him Eos Ceiriog, or the Ceiriog Nightingale.

So John Jones and myself set off across the Berwyn to visit the birthplace of the great poet Huw Morris. We ascended the mountain by Allt Paddy. The morning was lowering, and before we had half got to the top it began to rain. John Jones was in his usual good spirits. Suddenly taking me by the arm he told me to look to the right across the gorge to a white house, which he pointed out.

'What is there in that house?' said I.

'An aunt of mine lives there,' said he.

Having frequently heard him call old women his aunts, I said, 'Every poor old woman in the neighbourhood seems to be your aunt.'

'This is no poor old woman,' said he, 'she is cyfoethawg iawn, and only last week she sent

me and my family a pound of bacon, which would have cost me sixpence-halfpenny, and about a month ago a measure of wheat.'

We passed over the top of the mountain, and descending the other side reached Llansanfraid, and stopped at the public-house where we had been before, and called for two glasses of ale. Whilst drinking our ale Jones asked some questions about Huw Morris of the woman who served us; she said that he was a famous poet, and that people of his blood were yet living upon the lands which had belonged to him at Pont y Meibion. Jones told her that his companion, the gwr boneddig, meaning myself, had come in order to see the birthplace of Huw Morris, and that I was well acquainted with his works, having gotten them by heart in Lloegr, when a boy. The woman said that nothing would give her greater pleasure than to hear a Sais recite poetry of Huw Morris, whereupon I recited a number of his lines addressed to the Gôf Du, or blacksmith. The woman held up her hands, and a carter who was in the kitchen, somewhat the worse for liquor, shouted applause. After asking a few questions as to the road we were to take, we left the house, and in a little time entered the valley of Ceiriog. The valley is very narrow, huge hills overhanging it on both sides, those on the east side lumpy and bare, those on the west precipitous, and partially clad with wood; the torrent Ceiriog runs down it, clinging to the east side; the road is tolerably good, and is to the west of the stream. Shortly

after we had entered the gorge, we passed by a small farm-house on our right hand, with a hawthorn hedge before it, upon which seems to stand a peacock, curiously cut out of thorn. Passing on we came to a place called Pandy uchaf, or the higher fulling mill. The place so called is a collection of ruinous houses, which put me in mind of the fulling mills mentioned in 'Don Quixote.' It is called the Pandy because there was formerly a fulling mill here, said to have been the first established in Wales; which is still to be seen, but which is no longer worked. Just above the old mill there is a meeting of streams, the Tarw from the west rolls down a dark valley into the Ceiriog.

At the entrance of this valley and just before you reach the Pandy, which it nearly overhangs, is an enormous crag. After I had looked at the place for some time with considerable interest, we proceeded towards the south, and in about twenty minutes reached a neat kind of house, on our right hand, which John Jones told me stood on the ground of Huw Morris. Telling me to wait, he went to the house, and asked some questions. After a little time I followed him and found him discoursing at the door with a stout dame about fifty-five years of age, and a stout, buxom damsel of about seventeen, very short of stature.

'This is the gentleman,' said he, 'who wishes to see anything there may be here connected with Huw Morris.'

The old dame made me a curtsey, and said

in very distinct Welsh, 'We have some things in the house which belonged to him, and we will show them to the gentleman willingly.'

'We first of all wish to see his chair,' said John Jones.

'The chair is in a wall in what is called the hen ffordd (old road),' said the old gentlewoman; 'it is cut out of the stone wall, you will have maybe some difficulty in getting to it, but the girl shall show it to you.' The girl now motioned to us to follow her, and conducted us across the road to some stone steps, over a wall to a place which looked like a plantation.

'This was the old road,' said Jones; 'but the place has been enclosed. The new road is above us on our right hand beyond the wall.'

We were in a maze of tangled shrubs, the boughs of which, very wet from the rain which was still falling, struck our faces, as we attempted to make our way between them; the girl led the way, bare-headed and bare-armed, and soon brought us to the wall, the boundary of the new road. Along this she went with considerable difficulty, owing to the tangled shrubs, and the nature of the ground, which was very precipitous, shelving down to the other side of the enclosure. In a little time we were wet to the skin, and covered with the dirt of birds, which they had left whilst roosting in the trees; on went the girl, sometimes creeping, and trying to keep herself from falling by holding against the young trees; once or twice she fell and we after her, for there was no path, and the ground, as I have

said before, very shelvy; still as she went her eyes were directed towards the wall, which was not always very easy to be seen, for thorns, tall nettles and shrubs, were growing up against it. Here and there she stopped, and said something, which I could not always make out, for her Welsh was anything but clear; at length I heard her say that she was afraid we had passed the chair, and indeed presently we came to a place where the enclosure terminated in a sharp corner.

'Let us go back,' said I; 'we must have passed it.'

I now went first, breaking down with my weight the shrubs nearest to the wall.

'Is not this the place?' said I, pointing to a kind of hollow in the wall, which looked something like the shape of a chair.

'Hardly,' said the girl, 'for there should be a slab on the back, with letters, but there 's neither slab nor letters here.'

The girl now again went forward, and we retraced our way, doing the best we could to discover the chair, but all to no purpose; no chair was to be found. We had now been, as I imagined, half-an-hour in the enclosure, and had nearly got back to the place from which we had set out, when we suddenly heard the voice of the old lady exclaiming, 'What are ye doing there, the chair is on the other side of the field; wait a bit, and I will come and show it you'; getting over the stone stile, which led into the wilderness, she came to us, and we now went along the wall at the lower end; we had quite

as much difficulty here as on the other side, and in some places more, for the nettles were higher, the shrubs more tangled, and the thorns more terrible. The ground, however, was rather more level. I pitied the poor girl who led the way, and whose fat naked arms were both stung and torn. She at last stopped amidst a huge grove of nettles, doing the best she could to shelter her arms from the stinging leaves.

'I never was in such a wilderness in my life,' said I to John Jones, 'is it possible that the chair of the mighty Huw is in a place like this; which seems never to have been trodden by human foot. Well does the Scripture say "Dim prophwyd yw yn cael barch yn ei dir ei hunan."'

This last sentence tickled the fancy of my worthy friend, the Calvinistic Methodist, he laughed aloud and repeated it over and over again to the females with amplifications.

'Is the chair really here,' said I, 'or has it been destroyed? if such a thing has been done, it is a disgrace to Wales.'

'The chair is really here,' said the old lady, 'and though Huw Morus was no prophet, we love and reverence everything belonging to him. Get on Llances, the chair can't be far off'; the girl moved on, and presently the old lady exclaimed, 'There 's the chair, Diolch i Duw!'

I was the last of the file, but I now rushed past John Jones, who was before me, and next to the old lady, and sure enough there was the chair, in the wall, of him who was called in his day, and still is called by the mountaineers of Wales,

though his body has been below the earth in the quiet churchyard one hundred and forty years, Eos Ceiriog, the Nightingale of Ceiriog, the sweet caroller Huw Morus, the enthusiastic partisan of Charles, and the Church of England, and the never-tiring lampooner of Oliver and the Independents, there it was, a kind of hollow in the stone wall, in the hen ffordd, fronting to the west, just above the gorge at the bottom of which murmurs the brook Ceiriog, there it was, something like a half barrel chair in a garden, a mouldering stone slab forming the seat, and a large slate stone, the back, on which were cut these letters:

H. M. B.

signifying Huw Morus, Bard.

'Sit down in the chair, Gwr Boneddig,' said John Jones, 'you have taken trouble enough to get to it.'

'Do, gentleman,' said the old lady; 'but first let me wipe it with my apron, for it is very wet and dirty.'

'Let it be,' said I; then taking off my hat I stood uncovered before the chair, and said in the best Welsh I could command, 'Shade of Huw Morus, supposing your shade haunts the place which you loved so well when alive—a Saxon, one of the seed of the Coiling Serpent, has come to this place to pay that respect to true genius, the Dawn Duw, which he is ever ready to pay. He read the songs of the Nightingale of Ceiriog in the most distant part of Lloegr, when he was a brown-haired boy, and now that he is a grey-

haired man he is come to say in this place that they frequently made his eyes overflow with tears of rapture.'

I then sat down in the chair, and commenced repeating verses of Huw Morris. All which I did in the presence of the stout old lady, the short, buxom and bare-armed damsel, and of John Jones the Calvinistic weaver of Llangollen, all of whom listened patiently and approvingly, though the rain was pouring down upon them, and the branches of the trees and the tops of the tall nettles, agitated by the gusts from the mountain hollows, were beating in their faces, for enthusiasm is never scoffed at by the noble simple-minded, genuine Welsh, whatever treatment it may receive from the coarse-hearted, sensual, selfish Saxon.

After some time our party returned to the house—which put me very much in mind of the farm-houses of the substantial yeomen of Cornwall, particularly that of my friends at Penquite; a comfortable fire blazed in the kitchen grate, the floor was composed of large flags of slate. In the kitchen the old lady pointed to me the ffon, or walking-stick, of Huw Morris; it was supported against a beam by three hooks; I took it down and walked about the kitchen with it; it was a thin polished black stick, with a crome cut in the shape of an eagle's head; at the end was a brass fence. The kind creature then produced a sword without a scabbard; this sword was found by Huw Morris on the mountain—it belonged to one of Oliver's officers who

was killed there. I took the sword, which was a thin two-edged one, and seemed to be made of very good steel; it put me in mind of the blades which I had seen at Toledo—the guard was very slight like those of all rapiers, and the hilt the common old-fashioned English officer's hilt—there was no rust on the blade, and it still looked a dangerous sword. A man like Thistlewood would have whipped it through his adversary in a twinkling. I asked the old lady if Huw Morris was born in this house; she said no, but a little farther on at Pont y Meibion; she said, however, that the ground had belonged to him, and that they had some of his blood in their veins. I shook her by the hand, and gave the chubby, bare-armed damsel a shilling, pointing to the marks of the nettle stings on her fat, bacon-like arms; she laughed, made me a curtsey and said, 'Llawer iawn o diolch.'

John Jones and I then proceeded to the house at Pont y Meibion, where we saw two men, one turning a grindstone, and the other holding an adze to it. We asked if we were at the house of Huw Morris, and whether they could tell us anything about him, they made us no answer but proceeded with their occupation; John Jones then said that the Gwr Boneddig was very fond of the verses of Huw Morris, and had come a great way to see the place where he was born—the wheel now ceased turning, and the man with the adze turned his face full upon me—he was a stern-looking, dark man, with black hair, of

about forty; after a moment or two he said, that if I chose to walk into the house I should be welcome. He then conducted us into the house, a common-looking stone tenement, and bade us be seated. I asked him if he was a descendant of Huw Morus; he said he was; I asked him his name, which he said was Huw ——. 'Have you any of the manuscripts of Huw Morus?' said I.

'None,' said he, 'but I have one of the printed copies of his works.'

He then went to a drawer, and taking out a book, put it into my hand, and seated himself in a blunt, careless manner. The book was the first volume of the common Wrexham edition of Huw's works; it was much thumbed—I commenced reading aloud a piece which I had much admired in my boyhood. I went on for some time, my mind quite occupied with my reading; at last lifting up my eyes I saw the man standing bolt upright before me, like a soldier of the days of my childhood, during the time that the adjutant read prayers; his hat was no longer upon his head, but on the ground, and his eyes were reverently inclined to the book. After all, what a beautiful thing it is, not to be, but to have been a genius. Closing the book, I asked him whether Huw Morris was born in the house where we were, and received for answer that he was born about where we stood, but that the old house had been pulled down, and that of all the premises only a small outhouse was coeval with Huw Morris. I asked him the name of the

house, and he said Pont y Meibion. 'But where is the bridge?' said I.

'The bridge,' he replied, 'is close by, over the Ceiriog. If you wish to see it, you must go down yon field, the house is called after the bridge.' Bidding him farewell, we crossed the road and going down the field speedily arrived at Pont y Meibion. The bridge is a small bridge of one arch which crosses the brook Ceiriog—it is built of rough moor stone; it is mossy, broken, and looks almost inconceivably old; there is a little parapet to it about two feet high. On the right-hand side it is shaded by an ash; the brook when we viewed it, though at times a roaring torrent, was stealing along gently. On both sides it is overgrown with alders, noble hills rise above it to the east and west, John Jones told me that it abounded with trout. I asked him why the bridge was called Pont y Meibion, which signifies the bridge of the children. 'It was built originally by children,' said he, 'for the purpose of crossing the brook.'

'That bridge,' said I, 'was never built by children.'

'The first bridge,' said he, 'was of wood, and was built by the children of the houses above.'

Not quite satisfied with his explanation, I asked him to what place the road across the little bridge led, and was told that he believed it led to an upland farm. After taking a long and wistful view of the bridge and the scenery around it, I turned my head in the direction of Llangollen. The adventures of the day were, however, not finished.

CHAPTER XXI

The Gloomy Valley—The Lonely Cottage—Happy Comparison—Clogs—The Alder Swamp—The Wooden Leg—The Militiaman—Death-bed Verses.

On reaching the ruined village where the Pandy stood, I stopped and looked up the gloomy valley to the west, down which the brook which joins the Ceiriog at this place descends, whereupon John Jones said, that if I wished to go up it a little way he should have great pleasure in attending me, and that he would show me a cottage built in the hen ddull, or old fashion, to which he frequently went to ask for the rent; he being employed by various individuals in the capacity of rent-gatherer. I said that I was afraid that if he was a rent-collector, both he and I should have a sorry welcome. 'No fear,' he replied, 'the people are very good people, and pay their rent very regularly,' and without saying another word he led the way up the valley. At the end of the village, seeing a woman standing at the door of one of the ruinous cottages, I asked her the name of the brook, or torrent, which came down the valley. 'The Tarw,' said she, 'and this village is called Pandy Teirw.'

'Why is the streamlet called the Bull?' said I. 'Is it because it comes in winter weather roaring down the glen and butting at the Ceiriog?'

The woman laughed, and replied that perhaps it was. The valley was wild and solitary to an extraordinary degree, the brook or torrent running in the middle of it covered with alder trees. After we had proceeded about a furlong we reached the house of the old fashion—it was a rude stone cottage standing a little above the road on a kind of platform on the right-hand side of the glen; there was a paling before it with a gate, at which a pig was screaming, as if anxious to get in. 'It wants its dinner,' said John Jones, and opened the gate for me to pass, taking precautions that the screamer did not enter at the same time. We entered the cottage, very glad to get into it, a storm of wind and rain having just come on. Nobody was in the kitchen when we entered; it looked comfortable enough, however, there was an excellent fire of wood and coals, and a very snug chimney-corner. John Jones called aloud, but for some time no one answered; at last a rather good-looking woman, seemingly about thirty, made her appearance at a door at the farther end of the kitchen. 'Is the mistress at home,' said Jones, 'or the master?'

'They are neither at home,' said the woman, 'the master is abroad at his work, and the mistress is at the farm-house of —— three miles off to pick feathers (trwsio plu).' She asked us to sit down.

'And who are you?' said I.

'I am only a lodger,' said she, 'I lodge here with my husband who is a clog-maker.'

'Can you speak English?' said I.

'O yes,' said she, 'I lived eleven years in England, at a place called Bolton, where I married my husband, who is an Englishman.'

'Can he speak Welsh?' said I.

'Not a word,' said she. 'We always speak English together.'

John Jones sat down, and I looked about the room. It exhibited no appearance of poverty; there was plenty of rude but good furniture in it; several pewter plates and trenchers in a rack, two or three prints in frames against the wall, one of which was the likeness of no less a person than the Rev. Joseph Sanders, on the table was a newspaper. 'Is that in Welsh?' said I.

'No,' replied the woman, 'it is the *Bolton Chronicle*, my husband reads it.'

I sat down in the chimney-corner. The wind was now howling abroad, and the rain was beating against the cottage panes—presently a gust of wind came down the chimney, scattering sparks all about. 'A cataract of sparks!' said I, using the word Rhaiadr.

'What is Rhaiadr?' said the woman; 'I never heard the word before.'

'Rhaiadr means water tumbling over a rock,' said John Jones—'did you never see water tumble over the top of a rock?'

'Frequently,' said she.

'Well,' said he, 'even as the water with its froth tumbles over the rock, so did sparks and fire tumble over the front of that grate when the wind blew down the chimney. It was a happy

comparison of the Gwr Boneddig, and with respect to Rhaiadr it is a good old word, though not a common one; some of the Saxons who have read the old writings, though they cannot speak the language as fast as we, understand many words and things which we do not.'

'I forgot much of my Welsh in the land of the Saxons,' said the woman, 'and so have many others; there are plenty of Welsh at Bolton, but their Welsh is sadly corrupted.'

She then went out and presently returned with an infant in her arms and sat down. 'Was that child born in Wales?' I demanded.

'No,' said she, 'he was born at Bolton, about eighteen months ago—we have been here only a year.'

'Do many English,' said I, 'marry Welsh wives?'

'A great many,' said she. 'Plenty of Welsh girls are married to Englishmen at Bolton.'

'Do the Englishmen make good husbands?' said I.

The woman smiled and presently sighed.

'Her husband,' said Jones, 'is fond of a glass of ale and is often at the public-house.'

'I make no complaint,' said the woman, looking somewhat angrily at John Jones.

'Is your husband a tall bulky man?' said I.

'Just so,' said the woman.

'The largest of the two men we saw the other night at the public-house at Llansanfraid,' said I to John Jones.

'I don't know him,' said Jones, 'though I

have heard of him, but I have no doubt that was he.'

I asked the woman how her husband could carry on the trade of a clog-maker in such a remote place—and also whether he hawked his clogs about the country.

'We call him a clog-maker,' said the woman, 'but the truth is that he merely cuts down the wood and fashions it into squares, these are taken by an under-master who sends them to the manufacturer at Bolton, who employs hands, who make them into clogs.'

'Some of the English,' said Jones, 'are so poor that they cannot afford to buy shoes; a pair of shoes cost ten or twelve shillings, whereas a pair of clogs cost only two.'

'I suppose,' said I, 'that what you call clogs are wooden shoes.'

'Just so,' said Jones—'they are principally used in the neighbourhood of Manchester.'

'I have seen them at Huddersfield,' said I, 'when I was a boy at school there; of what wood are they made?'

'Of the gwern, or alder tree,' said the woman, 'of which there is plenty on both sides of the brook.'

John Jones now asked her if she could give him a tamaid of bread; she said she could, 'and some butter with it.'

She then went out and presently returned with a loaf and some butter.

'Had you not better wait,' said I, 'till we get to the inn at Llansanfraid?'

The woman, however, begged him to eat some bread and butter where he was, and cutting a plateful, placed it before him, having first offered me some which I declined.

'But you have nothing to drink with it,' said I to him.

'If you please,' said the woman, 'I will go for a pint of ale to the public-house at the Pandy, there is better ale there than at the inn at Llansanfraid. When my husband goes to Llansanfraid he goes less for the ale than for the conversation, because there is little English spoken at the Pandy, however good the ale.'

John Jones said he wanted no ale—and attacking the bread and butter, speedily made an end of it; by the time he had done the storm was over, and getting up I gave the child twopence, and left the cottage with Jones. We proceeded some way farther up the valley, till we came to a place where the ground descended a little. Here Jones touching me on the shoulder pointed across the stream. Following with my eye the direction of his finger, I saw two or three small sheds with a number of small reddish blocks in regular piles beneath them. Several trees felled from the side of the torrent were lying near, some of them stripped of their arms and bark. A small tree formed a bridge across the brook to the sheds.

'It is there,' said John Jones, 'that the husband of the woman with whom we have been speaking works, felling trees from the alder swamp and cutting them up into blocks. I see

there is no work going on at present or we would go over—the woman told me that her husband was at Llangollen.'

'What a strange place to come to work at,' said I, 'out of crowded England. Here is nothing to be heard but the murmuring of waters and the rushing of wind down the gulleys. If the man's head is not full of poetical fancies, which I suppose it is not, as in that case he would be unfit for any useful employment, I don't wonder at his occasionally going to the public-house.'

After going a little farther up the glen and observing nothing more remarkable than we had seen already, we turned back. Being overtaken by another violent shower just as we reached the Pandy, I thought that we could do no better than shelter ourselves within the public-house, and taste the ale, which the wife of the clog-maker had praised. We entered the little hostelry which was one of two or three shabby-looking houses, standing in contact, close by the Ceiriog. In a kind of little back-room, lighted by a good fire and a window which looked up the Ceiriog valley, we found the landlady, a gentlewoman with a wooden leg, who on perceiving me got up from a chair, and made me the best curtsey that I ever saw made by a female with such a substitute for a leg of flesh and bone. There were three men sitting with jugs of ale near them on a table by the fire, two were seated on a bench by the wall, and the other on a settle with a high back, which ran from the wall just by the door, and shielded

those by the fire from the draughts of the doorway. He of the settle no sooner beheld me than he sprang up, and placing a chair for me by the fire bade me in English be seated, and then resumed his own seat. John Jones soon finding a chair came and sat down by me, when I forthwith called for a quart of cwrw da. The landlady bustled about on her wooden leg and presently brought us the ale with two glasses, which I filled, and taking one drank to the health of the company, who returned us thanks, the man of the settle in English rather broken. Presently one of his companions getting up paid his reckoning and departed, the other remained, a stout young fellow dressed something like a stonemason, which indeed I soon discovered that he was—he was far advanced towards a state of intoxication and talked very incoherently about the war, saying that he hoped it would soon terminate, for that if it continued he was afraid he might stand a chance of being shot, as he was a private in the Denbighshire Militia. I told him that it was the duty of every gentleman in the militia to be willing at all times to lay down his life in the service of the Queen. The answer which he made I could not exactly understand, his utterance being very indistinct and broken; it was, however, made with some degree of violence, with two or three Myn Diawls, and a blow on the table with his clenched fist. He then asked me whether I thought the militia would be again called out. 'Nothing more probable,' said I.

'And where would they be sent to?'

'Perhaps to Ireland,' was my answer, whereupon he started up with another Myn Diawl, expressing the greatest dread of being sent to Iwerddon.

'You ought to rejoice in your chance of going there,' said I, 'Iwerddon is a beautiful country, and abounds with whisky.'

'And the Irish?' said he.

'Hearty, jolly fellows,' said I, 'if you know how to manage them, and all gentlemen.'

Here he became very violent, saying that I did not speak truth, for that he had seen plenty of Irish camping amidst the hills, that the men were half naked, and the women three parts so, and that they carried their children on their backs. He then said that he hoped somebody would speedily kill Nicholas, in order that the war might be at an end and himself not sent to Iwerddon. He then asked if I thought Cronstadt could be taken. I said I believed it could, provided the hearts of those who were sent to take it were in the right place.

'Where do you think the hearts of those are who are gone against it?' said he—speaking with great vehemence.

I made no other answer than by taking my glass and drinking.

His companion now looking at our habiliments, which were in rather a dripping condition, asked John Jones if we had come from far.

'We have been to Pont y Meibion,' said Jones, 'to see the chair of Huw Morris,' adding that

the Gwr Boneddig was a great admirer of the songs of the Eos Ceiriog.

He had no sooner said these words than the intoxicated militiaman started up and, striking the table with his fist, said: 'I am a poor stonecutter—this is a rainy day and I have come here to pass it in the best way I can. I am somewhat drunk, but though I am a poor stonemason, a private in the militia, and not so sober as I should be, I can repeat more of the songs of the Eos than any man alive, however great a gentleman, however sober—more than Sir Watkin, more than Colonel Biddulph himself.'

He then began to repeat what appeared to be poetry, for I could distinguish the rhymes occasionally, though owing to his broken utterance it was impossible for me to make out the sense of the words. Feeling a great desire to know what verses of Huw Morris the intoxicated youth would repeat, I took out my pocket-book and requested Jones, who was much better acquainted with Welsh pronunciation, under any circumstances, than myself, to endeavour to write down from the mouth of the young fellow any verses uppermost in his mind. Jones took the pocket-book and pencil and went to the window, followed by the young man scarcely able to support himself. Here a curious scene took place, the drinker hiccuping up verses, and Jones dotting them down in the best manner he could, though he had evidently great difficulty to distinguish what was said to him. At last, methought, the young

man said—'There they are, the verses of the Nightingale, on his death-bed.'

I took the book and read aloud the following lines beautifully descriptive of the eagerness of a Christian soul to leave its perishing tabernacle, and get to Paradise and its Creator :—

'Myn'd i'r wyl ar redeg,
I'r byd a beryi chwaneg,
I Beradwys, y ber wiw deg,
Yn Enw Duw yn union deg.'

'Do you understand those verses?' said the man on the settle, a dark, swarthy fellow with an oblique kind of vision, and dressed in a pepper-and-salt coat.

'I will translate them,' said I; 'and forthwith put them into English—first into prose and then into rhyme, the rhymed version running thus :—

"Now to my rest I hurry away,
To the world which lasts for ever and aye,
To Paradise, the beautiful place,
Trusting alone in the Lord of Grace."'—

'Well,' said he of the pepper-and-salt, 'if that isn't capital I don't know what is.'

A scene in a public-house, yes! but in a Welsh public-house. Only think of a Suffolk toper repeating the death-bed verses of a poet; surely there is a considerable difference between the Celt and the Saxon.

CHAPTER XXII

Llangollen Fair—Buyers and Sellers—The Jockey—The Greek Cap.

On the twenty-first was held Llangollen Fair. The day was dull with occasional showers. I went to see the fair about noon. It was held in and near a little square in the south-east quarter of the town, of which square the police-station is the principal feature on the side of the west, and an inn, bearing the sign of the Grapes, on the east. The fair was a little bustling fair, attended by plenty of people from the country, and from the English border, and by some who appeared to come from a greater distance than the border. A dense row of carts extended from the police-station, half across the space; these carts were filled with pigs, and had stout cord-nettings drawn over them to prevent the animals escaping. By the sides of these carts the principal business of the fair appeared to be going on—there stood the owners, male and female, higgling with Llangollen men and women, who came to buy. The pigs were all small, and the price given seemed to vary from eighteen to twenty-five shillings. Those who bought pigs generally carried them away in their arms; and then there was no little diversion; dire was the screaming of the porkers, yet the purchaser

invariably appeared to know how to manage his bargain, keeping the left arm round the body of the swine and with the right hand fast griping the ear—some few were led away by strings. There were some Welsh cattle, small of course, and the purchasers of these seemed to be Englishmen, tall burly fellows in general, far exceeding the Welsh in height and size.

Much business in the cattle-line did not seem, however, to be going on. Now and then a big fellow made an offer, and held out his hand for a little Pictish grazier to give it a slap—a cattle bargain being concluded by a slap of the hand —but the Welshman generally turned away, with a half-resentful exclamation. There were a few horses and ponies in a street leading into the fair from the south.

I saw none sold, however. A tall athletic figure was striding amongst them, evidently a jockey and a stranger, looking at them and occasionally asking a slight question of one or another of their proprietors, but he did not buy. He might in age be about eight-and-twenty, and about six feet and three-quarters of an inch in height; in build he was perfection itself, a better built man I never saw. He wore a cap and a brown jockey coat, trowsers, leggings and high-lows, and sported a single spur. He had whiskers —all jockeys should have whiskers—but he had what I did not like, and what no genuine jockey should have, a moustache, which looks coxcombical and Frenchified—but most things have terribly changed since I was young. Three or

four hardy-looking fellows, policemen, were gliding about in their blue coats and leather hats, holding their thin walking-sticks behind them; conspicuous amongst whom was the leader, a tall lathy North Briton with a keen eye and hard features. Now if I add there was much gabbling of Welsh round about, and here and there some slight sawing of English—that in the street leading from the north there were some stalls of gingerbread and a table at which a queer-looking being, with a red Greek-looking cap on his head, sold rhubarb, herbs, and phials, containing the Lord knows what, and who spoke a low vulgar English dialect—I repeat, if I add this, I think I have said all that is necessary about Llangollen Fair.

CHAPTER XXIII

An Expedition—Pont y Pandy—The Sabbath—Glendower's Mount—Burial-place of Old—Corwen—The Deep Glen—The Grandmother—The Roadside Chapel.

I WAS now about to leave Llangollen, for a short time, and to set out on an expedition to Bangor, Snowdon, and one or two places in Anglesea. I had determined to make the journey on foot, in order that I might have perfect liberty of action, and enjoy the best opportunities of seeing the country. My wife and daughter were to meet me at Bangor, to which place they would repair by the railroad, and from which, after seeing some of the mountain districts, they would return to Llangollen by the way they came, where I proposed to rejoin them, returning, however, by a different way from the one I went, that I might traverse new districts. About eleven o'clock of a brilliant Sunday morning I left Llangollen, after reading the morning service of the Church to my family. I set out on a Sunday because I was anxious to observe the general demeanour of the people, in the interior of the country, on the Sabbath.

I directed my course towards the west, to the head of the valley. My wife and daughter after walking with me about a mile bade me farewell, and returned. Quickening my pace I soon left the Llangollen valley behind me and entered another

vale, along which the road which I was following, and which led to Corwen and other places, might be seen extending for miles. Lumpy hills were close upon my left, the Dee running noisily between steep banks, fringed with trees, was on my right; beyond it rose hills which form part of the wall of the Vale of Clwyd; their tops bare, but their sides pleasantly coloured with yellow corn-fields and woods of dark verdure. About an hour's walking, from the time when I entered the valley, brought me to a bridge over a gorge, down which water ran to the Dee. I stopped and looked over the side of the bridge nearest to the hill. A huge rock, about forty feet long by twenty broad, occupied the entire bed of the gorge, just above the bridge, with the exception of a little gullet to the right, down which between the rock and a high bank, on which stood a cottage, a run of water purled and brawled. The rock looked exactly like a huge whale lying on its side, with its back turned towards the runnel. Above it was a glen with trees. After I had been gazing a little time, a man making his appearance at the door of the cottage just beyond the bridge, I passed on and, drawing nigh to him, after a slight salutation asked him in English the name of the bridge.

'The name of the bridge, sir,' said the man, in very good English, 'is Pont y Pandy.'

'Does not that mean the bridge of the fulling mill?'

'I believe it does, sir,' said the man.

'Is there a fulling mill near?'

'No, sir, there was one some time ago, but it is now a sawing mill.'

Here a woman, coming out, looked at me steadfastly.

'Is that gentlewoman your wife?'

'She is no gentlewoman, sir, but she is my wife.'

'Of what religion are you?'

'We are Calvinistic Methodists, sir.'

'Have you been to chapel?'

'We are just returned, sir.'

Here the woman said something to her husband, which I did not hear, but the purport of which I guessed from the following question which he immediately put.

'Have you been to chapel, sir?'

'I do not go to chapel; I belong to the Church.'

'Have you been to church, sir?'

'I have not—I said my prayers at home, and then walked out.'

'It is not right to walk out on the Sabbath day, except to go to church or chapel.'

'Who told you so?'

'The law of God, which says you shall keep holy the Sabbath day.'

'I am not keeping it unholy.'

'You are walking about, and in Wales when we see a person walking idly about, on the Sabbath day, we are in the habit of saying, Sabbath-breaker, where are you going?'

'The Son of Man walked through the fields on the Sabbath day, why should I not walk along the roads?'

'He who called Himself the Son of Man was God, and could do what He pleased, but you are not God.'

'But He came in the shape of a man to set an example. Had there been anything wrong in walking about on the Sabbath day, He would not have done it.'

Here the wife exclaimed, 'How worldly-wise these English are!'

'You do not like the English,' said I.

'We do not dislike them,' said the woman; 'at present they do us no harm, whatever they did of old.'

'But you still consider them,' said I, 'the seed of Y Sarfes cadwynog, the Coiling Serpent.'

'I should be loth to call any people the seed of the serpent,' said the woman.

'But one of your great bards did,' said I.

'He must have belonged to the Church, and not to the chapel, then,' said the woman. 'No person who went to chapel would have used such bad words.'

'He lived,' said I, 'before people were separated into those of the Church and the chapel; did you ever hear of Taliesin Ben Beirdd?'

'I never did,' said the woman.

'But I have,' said the man; 'and of Owain Glendower too.'

'Do people talk much of Owen Glendower in these parts?' said I.

'Plenty,' said the man, 'and no wonder, for when he was alive he was much about here—some way farther on there is a mount, on the

bank of the Dee, called the mount of Owen Glendower, where it is said he used to stand and look out after his enemies.'

'Is it easy to find?' said I.

'Very easy,' said the man, 'it stands right upon the Dee and is covered with trees; there is no mistaking it.'

I bade the man and his wife farewell, and proceeded on my way. After walking about a mile, I perceived a kind of elevation which answered to the description of Glendower's mount, which the man by the bridge had given me. It stood on the right hand, at some distance from the road, across a field. As I was standing looking at it a man came up from the direction in which I myself had come. He was a middle-aged man, plainly but decently dressed, and had something of the appearance of a farmer.

'What hill may that be?' said I in English, pointing to the elevation.

'Dim Saesneg, sir,' said the man, looking rather sheepish, 'Dim gair o Saesneg.'

Rather surprised that a person of his appearance should not have a word of English, I repeated my question in Welsh.

'Ah, you speak Cumraeg, sir,' said the man, evidently surprised that a person of my English appearance should speak Welsh. 'I am glad of it! What hill is that, you ask—Dyma Mont Owain Glyndwr, sir.'

'Is it easy to get to?' said I.

'Quite easy, sir,' said the man. 'If you please I will go with you.'

I thanked him, and opening a gate he conducted me across the field to the mount of the Welsh hero.

The mount of Owen Glendower stands close upon the southern bank of the Dee, and is nearly covered with trees of various kinds. It is about thirty feet high from the plain, and about the same diameter at the top. A deep black pool of the river, which here runs far beneath the surface of the field, purls and twists under the northern side, which is very steep, though several large oaks spring out of it. The hill is evidently the work of art, and appeared to me to be some burying-place of old.

'And this is the hill of Owain Glyndwr?' said I.

'Dyma Mont Owain Glyndwr, sir, lle yr oedd yn sefyll i edrych am ei elynion yn dyfod o Gaer Lleon. This is the hill of Owen Glendower, sir, where he was in the habit of standing to look out for his enemies coming from Chester.'

'I suppose it was not covered with trees then?' said I.

'No, sir; it has not been long planted with trees. They say, however, that the oaks which hang over the river are very old.'

'Do they say who raised this hill?'

'Some say that God raised it, sir; others that Owain Glendower raised it. Who do you think raised it?'

'I believe that it was raised by man, but not by Owen Glendower. He may have stood upon it, to watch for the coming of his enemies, but

I believe it was here long before his time, and that it was raised over some old dead king by the people whom he had governed.'

'Do they bury kings by the side of rivers, sir?'

'In the old time they did, and on the tops of mountains; they burnt their bodies to ashes, placed them in pots and raised heaps of earth or stones over them. Heaps like this have frequently been opened, and found to contain pots with ashes and bones.'

'I wish all English could speak Welsh, sir.'

'Why?'

'Because then we poor Welsh who can speak no English could learn much which we do not know.'

Descending the monticle we walked along the road together. After a little time I asked my companion of what occupation he was and where he lived.

'I am a small farmer, sir,' said he, 'and live at Llansanfraid Glyn Dyfrdwy across the river.'

'How comes it,' said I, 'that you do not know English?'

'When I was young,' said he, 'and could have easily learnt it, I cared nothing about it, and now that I am old and see its use, it is too late to acquire it.'

'Of what religion are you?' said I.

'I am of the Church,' he replied.

I was about to ask him if there were many people of his persuasion in these parts; before, however, I could do so he turned down a road

to the right which led towards a small bridge, and, saying that was his way home, bade me farewell and departed.

I arrived at Corwen, which is just ten miles from Llangollen, and which stands beneath a vast range of rocks at the head of the valley up which I had been coming, and which is called Glyndyfrdwy, or the valley of the Dee water. It was now about two o'clock, and feeling rather thirsty I went to an inn very appropriately called the Owen Glendower, being the principal inn in the principal town of what was once the domain of the great Owen. Here I stopped for about an hour refreshing myself and occasionally looking into a newspaper in which was an excellent article on the case of poor Lieutenant P. I then started for Cerrig y Drudion, distant about ten miles, where I proposed to pass the night. Directing my course to the north-west, I crossed a bridge over the Dee water and then proceeded rapidly along the road, which for some way lay between cornfields, in many of which sheaves were piled up, showing that the Welsh harvest was begun. I soon passed over a little stream, the name of which I was told was Alowan. 'O, what a blessing it is to be able to speak Welsh!' said I, finding that not a person to whom I addressed myself had a word of English to bestow upon me. After walking for about five miles I came to a beautiful but wild country of mountain and wood, with here and there a few cottages. The road at length making an abrupt turn to the

north, I found myself with a low stone wall on my left, on the verge of a profound ravine, and a high bank covered with trees on my right. Projecting out over the ravine was a kind of looking-place, protected by a wall, forming a half-circle, doubtless made by the proprietor of the domain for the use of the admirers of scenery. There I stationed myself, and for some time enjoyed one of the wildest and most beautiful scenes imaginable. Below me was the deep narrow glen or ravine, down which a mountain torrent roared and foamed. Beyond it was a mountain rising steeply, its nearer side, which was in deep shade, the sun having long sunk below its top, hirsute with all kinds of trees, from the highest pinnacle down to the torrent's brink. Cut on the top surface of the wall, which was of slate, and therefore easily impressible by the knife, were several names, doubtless those of tourists, who had gazed from the look-out on the prospect, amongst which I observed in remarkably bold letters that of T . . . .

'Eager for immortality, Mr. T.,' said I; 'but you are no H. M., no Huw Morris.'

Leaving the looking-place I proceeded, and, after one or two turnings, came to another, which afforded a view if possible yet more grand, beautiful and wild, the most prominent objects of which were a kind of devil's bridge flung over the deep glen and its foaming water, and a strange-looking hill beyond it, below which, with a wood on either side, stood a white farm-house —sending from a tall chimney a thin misty reek

up to the sky. I crossed the bridge, which, however diabolically fantastical it looked at a distance, seemed when one was upon it, capable of bearing any weight, and soon found myself by the farm-house past which the way led. An aged woman sat on a stool by the door.

'A fine evening,' said I in English.

'Dim Saesneg,' said the aged woman.

'O, the blessing of being able to speak Welsh,' said I; and then repeated in that language what I had said to her in the other tongue.

'I daresay,' said the aged woman, 'to those who can see.'

'Can you not see?'

'Very little. I am almost blind.'

'Can you not see me?'

'I can see something tall and dark before me; that is all.'

'Can you tell me the name of the bridge?'

'Pont y Glyn blin—the bridge of the glen of trouble.'

'And what is the name of this place?'

'Pen y bont—the head of the bridge.'

'What is your own name?'

'Catherine Hughes.'

'How old are you?'

'Fifteen after three twenties.'

'I have a mother three after four twenties; that is eight years older than yourself.'

'Can she see?'

'Better than I—she can read the smallest letters.'

'May she long be a comfort to you!'

'Thank you—are you the mistress of the house?'

'I am the grandmother.'

'Are the people in the house?'

'They are not—they are at the chapel.'

'And they left you alone?'

'They left me with my God.'

'Is the chapel far from here?'

'About a mile.'

'On the road to Cerrig y Drudion?'

'On the road to Cerrig y Drudion.'

I bade her farewell, and pushed on—the road was good, with high rocky banks on each side. After walking about the distance indicated by the old lady I reached a building, which stood on the right-hand side of the road, and which I had no doubt was the chapel, from a half-groaning, half-singing noise which proceeded from it. The door being open, I entered, and stood just within it, bare-headed. A rather singular scene presented itself. Within a large dimly-lighted room a number of people were assembled, partly seated in rude pews, and partly on benches. Beneath a kind of altar, a few yards from the door, stood three men—the middlemost was praying in Welsh in a singular kind of chant, with his arms stretched out. I could distinguish the words, 'Jesus descend among us! sweet Jesus descend among us—quickly.' He spoke very slowly, and towards the end of every sentence dropped his voice, so that what he said was anything but distinct. As I stood within the door a man dressed in coarse

garments came up to me from the interior of the building, and courteously, and in excellent Welsh, asked me to come with him and take a seat. With equal courtesy, but far inferior Welsh, I assured him that I meant no harm, but wished to be permitted to remain near the door, whereupon with a low bow he left me. When the man had concluded his prayer the whole of the congregation began singing a hymn, many of the voices were gruff and discordant, two or three, however, were of great power, and some of the female ones of surprising sweetness—at the conclusion of the hymn, another of the three men by the altar began to pray, just in the same manner as his comrade had done, and seemingly using much the same words. When he had done there was another hymn, after which, seeing that the congregation was about to break up, I bowed my head towards the interior of the building, and departed.

Emerging from the hollow way I found myself on a moor over which the road lay in the direction of the north. Towards the west at an immense distance rose a range of stupendous hills, which I subsequently learned were those of Snowdon—about ten minutes' walking brought me to Cerrig y Drudion, a small village near a rocky elevation, from which no doubt the place takes its name, which interpreted is the Rock of Heroes.

CHAPTER XXIV

Cerrig y Drudion—The Landlady—Doctor Jones—Coll Gwynfa—The Italian—Men of Como—Disappointment—Weather-glasses—Filicaia.

THE inn at Cerrig y Drudion was called The Lion—whether the white, black, red or green lion I do not know, though I am certain that it was a lion of some colour or other. It seemed as decent and respectable a hostelry as any traveller could wish, to refresh and repose himself in, after a walk of twenty miles. I entered a well-lighted passage, and from thence a well-lighted bar-room, on the right hand, in which sat a stout, comely, elderly lady, dressed in silks and satins, with a cambric coif on her head, in company with a thin, elderly man with a hat on his head, dressed in a rather prim and precise manner. 'Madam!' said I, bowing to the lady, 'as I suppose you are the mistress of this establishment, I beg leave to inform you that I am an Englishman walking through these regions in order fully to enjoy their beauties and wonders. I have this day come from Llangollen, and being somewhat hungry and fatigued, hope I can be accommodated here with a dinner and a bed.'

'Sir!' said the lady, getting up and making me a profound curtsey, 'I am as you suppose the mistress of this establishment, and am happy to say that I shall be able to accommodate you

—pray sit down, sir,' she continued, handing me a chair; 'you must indeed be tired, for Llangollen is a great way from here.'

I took the seat with thanks, and she resumed her own.

'Rather hot weather for walking, sir!' said the precise-looking gentleman.

'It is,' said I; 'but as I can't observe the country well without walking through it, I put up with the heat.'

'You exhibit a philosophic mind, sir,' said the precise-looking gentleman—'and a philosophic mind I hold in reverence.'

'Pray, sir,' said I, 'have I the honour of addressing a member of the medical profession?'

'Sir,' said the precise-looking gentleman, getting up and making me a bow, 'your question does honour to your powers of discrimination—a member of the medical profession I am, though an unworthy one.'

'Nay, nay, doctor,' said the landlady briskly; 'say not so—every one knows that you are a credit to your profession—well would it be if there were many in it like you—unworthy? marry come up! I won't hear such an expression.'

'I see,' said I, 'that I have not only the honour of addressing a medical gentleman, but a doctor of medicine—however, I might have known as much by your language and deportment.'

With a yet lower bow than before he replied with something of a sigh, 'No, sir, no, our

kind landlady and the neighbourhood are in the habit of placing doctor before my name, but I have no title to it—I am not Doctor Jones, sir, but plain Geffery Jones at your service,' and thereupon with another bow he sat down.

'Do you reside here?' said I.

'Yes, sir, I reside here in the place of my birth—I have not always resided here—and I did not always expect to spend my latter days in a place of such obscurity, but, sir, misfortunes—misfortunes . . .'

'Ah,' said I, 'misfortunes! they pursue every one, more especially those whose virtues should exempt them from them. Well, sir, the consciousness of not having deserved them should be your consolation.'

'Sir,' said the doctor taking off his hat, 'you are infinitely kind.'

'You call this an obscure place,' said I—'can that be an obscure place which has produced a poet? I have long had a respect for Cerrig y Drudion because it gave birth to, and was the residence of a poet of considerable merit.'

'I was not aware of that fact,' said the doctor, 'pray what was his name?'

'Peter Lewis,' said I; 'he was a clergyman of Cerrig y Drudion about the middle of the last century, and amongst other things wrote a beautiful song called 'Cathl y Gair Mwys,' or the melody of the ambiguous word.'

'Surely you do not understand Welsh?' said the doctor.

'I understand a little of it,' I replied.

'Will you allow me to speak to you in Welsh?' said the doctor.

'Certainly,' said I.

He spoke to me in Welsh and I replied.

'Ha, ha,' said the landlady in English; 'only think, doctor, of the gentleman understanding Welsh—we must mind what we say before him.'

'And are you an Englishman?' said the doctor.

'I am,' I replied.

'And how came you to learn it?'

'I am fond of languages,' said I, 'and studied Welsh at an early period.'

'And you read Welsh poetry?'

'O yes.'

'How were you enabled to master its difficulties?'

'Chiefly by going through Owen Pugh's version of 'Paradise Lost' twice, with the original by my side. He has introduced into that translation so many of the poetic terms of the old bards that after twice going through it, there was little in Welsh poetry that I could not make out with a little pondering.'

'You pursued a very excellent plan, sir,' said the doctor, 'a very excellent plan indeed. Owen Pugh!'

'Owen Pugh! The last of your very great men,' said I.

'You say right, sir,' said the doctor. 'He was indeed our last great man—Ultimus Romanorum. I have myself read his work, which he called 'Coll Gwynfa,' the Loss of the Place of

Bliss—an admirable translation, sir; highly poetical, and at the same time correct.'

'Did you know him?' said I.

'I had not the honour of his acquaintance,' said the doctor—'but, sir, I am happy to say that I have made yours.'

The landlady now began to talk to me about dinner, and presently went out to make preparations for that very important meal. I had a great deal of conversation with the doctor, whom I found a person of great and varied information, and one who had seen a vast deal of the world. He was giving me an account of an island in the West Indies, which he had visited, when a boy coming in whispered into his ear; whereupon, getting up, he said: 'Sir, I am called away. I am a country surgeon, and of course an accoucheur. There is a lady, who lives at some distance, requiring my assistance. It is with grief I leave you so abruptly, but I hope that some time or other we shall meet again.' Then making me an exceedingly profound bow, he left the room, followed by the boy.

I dined upstairs in a very handsome drawing-room communicating with a sleeping apartment. During dinner I was waited upon by the daughter of the landlady, a good-looking merry girl of twenty. After dinner I sat for some time thinking over the adventures of the day, then feeling rather lonely and not inclined to retire to rest, I went down to the bar, where I found the landlady seated with her daughter. I sat down with them and we were soon in conversation. We

spoke of Doctor Jones—the landlady said that he had his little eccentricities, but was an excellent and learned man. Speaking of herself, she said that she had three daughters, that the youngest was with her and that the two eldest kept the principal inn at Ruthyn. We occasionally spoke a little Welsh. At length the landlady said, 'There is an Italian in the kitchen who can speak Welsh too. It 's odd the only two people not Welshmen I have ever known who could speak Welsh, for such you and he are, should be in my house at the same time.'

'Dear me,' said I; 'I should like to see him.'

'That you can easily do,' said the girl; 'I daresay he will be glad enough to come in if you invite him.'

'Pray take my compliments to him,' said I, 'and tell him that I shall be glad of his company.'

The girl went out and presently returned with the Italian. He was a short, thick, strongly-built fellow of about thirty-seven, with a swarthy face, raven-black hair, high forehead, and dark deep eyes, full of intelligence and great determination. He was dressed in a velveteen coat, with broad lappets, red waistcoat, velveteen breeches, buttoning a little way below the knee; white stockings apparently of lamb's-wool, and high-lows.

'Buona sera!' said I.

'Buona sera, signore!' said the Italian.

'Will you have a glass of brandy and water?' said I in English.

'I never refuse a good offer,' said the Italian.

He sat down, and I ordered a glass of brandy and water for him and another for myself.

'Pray speak a little Italian to him,' said the good landlady to me. 'I have heard a great deal about the beauty of that language, and should like to hear it spoken.'

'From the Lago di Como?' said I, trying to speak Italian.

'Si, signore! but how came you to think that I was from the Lake of Como?'

'Because,' said I, 'when I was a ragazzo I knew many from the Lake of Como, who dressed much like yourself. They wandered about the country with boxes on their backs and weather-glasses in their hands, but had their head-quarters at N., where I lived.'

'Do you remember any of their names?' said the Italian.

'Giovanni Gestra and Luigi Pozzi,' I replied.

'I have seen Giovanni Gestra myself,' said the Italian, 'and I have heard of Luigi Pozzi. Giovanni Gestra returned to the Lago—but no one knows what is become of Luigi Pozzi.'

'The last time I saw him,' said I, 'was about eighteen years ago at Coruña, in Spain; he was then in a sad drooping condition, and said he bitterly repented ever quitting N.'

'E con ragione,' said the Italian, 'for there is no place like N. for doing business in the whole world. I myself have sold seventy pounds' worth of weather-glasses at N. in one day. One of our people is living there now, who has done bene, molto bene.'

'That 's Rossi,' said I, 'how is it that I did not mention him first? He is my excellent friend, and a finer, cleverer fellow never lived, nor a more honourable man. You may well say he has done well, for he is now the first jeweller in the place. The last time I was there I bought a diamond of him for my daughter Henrietta. Let us drink his health!'

'Willingly!' said the Italian. 'He is the prince of the Milanese of England—the most successful of all, but, I acknowledge, the most deserving. Che viva.'

'I wish he would write his life,' said I; 'a singular life it would be—he has been something besides a travelling merchant, and a jeweller. He was one of Buonaparte's soldiers, and served in Spain, under Soult, along with John Gestra. He once told me that Soult was an old rascal, and stole all the fine pictures from the convents at Salamanca. I believe he spoke with some degree of envy, for he is himself fond of pictures, and has dealt in them, and made hundreds by them. I question whether if in Soult's place he would not have done the same. Well, however that may be, che viva.'

Here the landlady interposed, observing that she wished we would now speak English, for that she had had quite enough of Italian, which she did not find near so pretty a language as she had expected.

'You must not judge of the sound of Italian from what proceeds from my mouth,' said I. 'It is not my native language. I have had

little practice in it, and only speak it very imperfectly.'

'Nor must you judge of Italian from what you have heard me speak,' said the man of Como; 'I am not good at Italian, for the Milanese speak amongst themselves a kind of jargon composed of many languages, and can only express themselves with difficulty in Italian. I have been doing my best to speak Italian, but should be glad now to speak English, which comes to me much more glibly.'

'Are there any books in your dialect, or jergo, as I believe you call it?' said I.

'I believe there are a few,' said the Italian.

'Do you know the word slandra?' said I.

'Who taught you that word?' said the Italian.

'Giovanni Gestra,' said I—'he was always using it.'

'Giovanni Gestra was a vulgar illiterate man,' said the Italian; 'had he not been so he would not have used it. It is a vulgar word; Rossi would not have used it.'

'What is the meaning of it?' said the landlady eagerly.

'To roam about in a dissipated manner,' said I.

'Something more,' said the Italian. 'It is considered a vulgar word even in jergo.'

'You speak English remarkably well,' said I; 'have you been long in Britain?'

'I came over about four years ago,' said the Italian.

'On your own account?' said I.

'Not exactly, signore; my brother, who was in business in Liverpool, wrote to me to come over and assist him. I did so, but soon left him, and took a shop for myself at Denbigh, where, however, I did not stay long. At present I travel for an Italian house in London, spending the summer in Wales and the winter in England.'

'And what do you sell?' said I.

'Weather-glasses, signore—pictures and little trinkets, such as the country people like.'

'Do you sell many weather-glasses in Wales?' said I.

'I do not, signore. The Welsh care not for weather-glasses; my principal customers for weather-glasses are the farmers of England.'

'I am told that you can speak Welsh,' said I; 'is that true?'

'I have picked up a little of it, signore.'

'He can speak it very well,' said the landlady; 'and glad should I be, sir, to hear you and him speak Welsh together.'

'So should I,' said the daughter who was seated nigh us; 'nothing would give me greater pleasure than to hear two who are not Welshmen speaking Welsh together.'

'I would rather speak English,' said the Italian; 'I speak a little Welsh, when my business leads me amongst people who speak no other language, but I see no necessity for speaking Welsh here.'

'It is a pity,' said I, 'that so beautiful a country as Italy should not be better governed.'

'It is, signore,' said the Italian; 'but let us

hope that a time will speedily come when she will be so.'

'I don't see any chance of it,' said I. 'How will you proceed in order to bring about so desirable a result as the good government of Italy?'

'Why, signore, in the first place we must get rid of the Austrians.'

'You will not find it an easy matter,' said I, 'to get rid of the Austrians; you tried to do so a little time ago, but miserably failed.'

'True, signore; but the next time we try, perhaps the French will help us.'

'If the French help you to drive the Austrians from Italy,' said I, 'you must become their servants. It is true you had better be the servants of the polished and chivalrous French, than of the brutal and barbarous Germans, but it is not pleasant to be a servant to anybody. However, I do not believe that you will ever get rid of the Austrians, even if the French assist you. The Pope for certain reasons of his own favours the Austrians, and will exert all the powers of priestcraft to keep them in Italy. Alas, alas, there is no hope for Italy! Italy, the most beautiful country in the world, the birthplace of the cleverest people, whose very pedlars can learn to speak Welsh, is not only enslaved, but destined always to remain enslaved.'

'Do not say so, signore,' said the Italian, with a kind of groan.

'But I do say so,' said I; 'and what is more, one whose shoe-strings, were he alive, I should

not be worthy to untie, one of your mighty ones, has said so. Did you ever hear of Vincenzio Filicaia ? '

' I believe I have, signore ; did he not write a sonnet on Italy ? '

' He did,' said I ; ' would you like to hear it ? '

' Very much, signore.'

I repeated Filicaia's glorious sonnet on Italy, and then asked him if he understood it.

' Only in part, signore ; for it is composed in old Tuscan, in which I am not much versed. I believe I should comprehend it better if you were to say it in English.'

' Do say it in English,' said the landlady and her daughter ; ' we should so like to hear it in English.'

' I will repeat a translation,' said I, ' which I made when a boy, which though far from good, has, I believe, in it something of the spirit of the original :—

' O Italy ! on whom dark Destiny
The dangerous gift of beauty did bestow,
From whence thou hast that ample dower of wo,
Which on thy front thou bear'st so visibly.
Would thou hadst beauty less or strength more high,
That more of fear, and less of love might show,
He who now blasts him in thy beauty's glow,
Or woos thee with a zeal that makes thee die ;
Then down from Alp no more would torrents rage
Of armed men, nor Gallic coursers hot
In Po's ensanguin'd tide their thirst assuage ;
Nor girt with iron, not thine own, I wot,
Wouldst thou the fight by hands of strangers wage,
Victress or vanquish'd slavery still thy lot.'

CHAPTER XXV

Lacing-up High-lows—The Native Village—Game Leg—Croppies Lie Down—Keeping Faith—Processions—Croppies Get Up—Daniel O'Connell.

I SLEPT in the chamber communicating with the room in which I had dined. The chamber was spacious and airy, the bed first-rate, and myself rather tired, so that no one will be surprised when I say that I had excellent rest. I got up, and after dressing myself went down. The morning was exceedingly brilliant. Going out I saw the Italian lacing up his high-lows against a step. I saluted him, and asked him if he was about to depart.

'Yes, signore; I shall presently start for Denbigh.'

'After breakfast I shall start for Bangor,' said I.

'Do you propose to reach Bangor to-night, signore?'

'Yes,' said I.

'Walking, signore?'

'Yes,' said I; 'I always walk in Wales.'

'Then you will have rather a long walk, signore; for Bangor is thirty-four miles from here.'

I asked him if he was married.

'No, signore; but my brother in Liverpool is.'

'To an Italian?'

'No, signore; to a Welsh girl.'

'And I suppose,' said I, 'you will follow his example by marrying one; perhaps that good-looking girl, the landlady's daughter, we were seated with last night?'

'No, signore; I shall not follow my brother's example. If ever I take a wife she shall be of my own village, in Como, whither I hope to return, as soon as I have picked up a few more pounds.'

'Whether the Austrians are driven away or not?' said I.

'Whether the Austrians are driven away or not—for to my mind there is no country like Como, signore.'

I ordered breakfast; whilst taking it in the room above I saw through the open window the Italian trudging forth on his journey, a huge box on his back, and a weather-glass in his hand—looking the exact image of one of those men his country people, whom forty years before I had known at N——. I thought of the course of time, sighed and felt a tear gather in my eye.

My breakfast concluded, I paid my bill, and after inquiring the way to Bangor, and bidding adieu to the kind landlady and her daughter, set out from Cerrig y Drudion. My course lay west, across a flat country, bounded in the far distance by the mighty hills I had seen on the preceding evening. After walking about a mile I overtook a man with a game leg, that is a leg which, either by nature or accident not being so long as its brother leg, had a patten attached to it, about five inches high, to enable it to do

duty with the other—he was a fellow with red shock hair and very red features, and was dressed in ragged coat and breeches and a hat which had lost part of its crown, and all its rim, so that even without a game leg he would have looked rather a queer figure. In his hand he carried a fiddle.

'Good morning to you,' said I.

'A good marning to your hanner, a merry afternoon and a roaring, joyous evening—that is the worst luck I wish to ye.'

'Are you a native of these parts?' said I.

'Not exactly, your hanner—I am a native of the city of Dublin, or, what 's all the same thing, of the village of Donnybrook which is close by it.'

'A celebrated place,' said I.

'Your hanner may say that; all the world has heard of Donnybrook, owing to the humours of its fair. Many is the merry tune I have played to the boys at that fair.'

'You are a professor of music, I suppose?'

'And not a very bad one, as your hanner will say, if you allow me to play you a tune.'

'Can you play Croppies Lie Down?'

'I cannot, your hanner, my fingers never learnt to play such a blackguard tune; but if you wish to hear Croppies Get Up, I can oblige ye.'

'You are a Roman Catholic, I suppose?'

'I am nat, your hanner—I am a Catholic to the backbone, just like my father before me. Come, your hanner, shall I play ye Croppies Get Up?'

'No,' said I; 'it 's a tune that doesn't please my ears. If, however, you choose to play Croppies Lie Down, I 'll give you a shilling.'

'Your hanner will give me a shilling?'

'Yes,' said I; 'if you play Croppies Lie Down: but you know you cannot play it, your fingers never learned the tune.'

'They never did, your hanner; but they have heard it played of ould by the blackguard Orange fiddlers of Dublin on the first of July, when the Protestant boys used to walk round Willie's statue on College Green—so if your hanner gives me the shilling they may perhaps bring out something like it.'

'Very good,' said I; 'begin!'

'But, your hanner, what shall we do for the words? though my fingers may remember the tune my tongue does not remember the words—that is unless . . .'

'I give another shilling,' said I; 'but never mind you the words; I know the words, and will repeat them.'

'And your hanner will give me a shilling?'

'If you play the tune,' said I.

'Hanner bright, your hanner?'

'Honour bright,' said I.

Thereupon the fiddler, taking his bow and shouldering his fiddle, struck up in first-rate style the glorious tune which I had so often heard with rapture in the days of my boyhood in the barrack-yard of Clonmel; whilst I, walking by his side as he stumped along, caused the welkin to resound with the words, which were

the delight of the young gentlemen of the Protestant academy of that beautiful old town.

'I never heard those words before,' said the fiddler, after I had finished the first stanza.

'Get on with you,' said I.

'Regular Orange words!' said the fiddler, on my finishing the second stanza.

'Do you choose to get on?' said I.

'More blackguard Orange words I never heard!' cried the fiddler, on my coming to the conclusion of the third stanza. 'Divil a bit farther will I play; at any rate till I get the shilling.'

'Here it is for you,' said I; 'the song is ended and of course the tune.'

'Thank your hanner,' said the fiddler, taking the money, 'your hanner has kept your word with me, which is more than I thought your hanner would. And now, your hanner, let me ask ye why did your hanner wish for that tune, which is not only a blackguard one but quite out of date; and where did your hanner get the words?'

'I used to hear the tune in my boyish days,' said I, 'and wished to hear it again, for though you call it a blackguard tune, it is the sweetest and most noble air that Ireland, the land of music, has ever produced. As for the words, never mind where I got them; they are violent enough, but not half so violent as the words of some of the songs made against the Irish Protestants by the priests.'

'Your hanner is an Orangeman,' I see. 'Well,

your hanner, the Orange is now in the kennel, and the Croppies have it all their own way.'

'And perhaps,' said I, 'before I die the Orange will be out of the kennel and the Croppies in, even as they were in my young days.'

'Who knows, your hanner? and who knows that I may not play the ould tune round Willie's image in College Green, even as I used some twenty-seven years ago?'

'O then you have been an Orange fiddler?'

'I have, your hanner. And now as your hanner has behaved like a gentleman to me I will tell ye all my history. I was born in the city of Dublin, that is, in the village of Donnybrook, as I tould your hanner before. It was to the trade of bricklaying I was bred, and bricklaying I followed till at last, getting my leg smashed, not by falling off the ladder, but by a row in the fair, I was obliged to give it up, for how could I run up the ladder with a patten on my foot, which they put on to make my broken leg as long as the other. Well, your hanner, being obliged to give up my bricklaying, I took to fiddling, to which I had always a natural inclination, and played about the streets, and at fairs, and wakes, and weddings. At length some Orangemen getting acquainted with me, and liking my style of playing, invited me to their lodge, where they gave me to drink, and tould me that if I would change my religion and join them, and play their tunes, they would make it answer my purpose. Well, your hanner, without much stickling I gave up my Popery,

joined the Orange lodge, learned the Orange tunes, and became a regular Protestant boy, and truly the Orangemen kept their word, and made it answer my purpose. O the meat and drink I got, and the money I made by playing at the Orange lodges and before the processions when the Orangemen paraded the streets with their Orange colours. And O what a day for me was the glorious first of July, when with my whole body covered with Orange ribbons I fiddled Croppies Lie Down, Boyne Water, and the Protestant Boys, before the procession which walked round Willie's figure on horseback in College Green, the man and horse all ablaze with Orange colours. But nothing lasts under the sun, as your hanner knows; Orangeism began to go down; the Government scowled at it, and at last passed a law preventing the Protestant boys dressing up the figure on the first of July, and walking round it. That was the death-blow of the Orange party, your hanner; they never recovered it, but began to despond and dwindle, and I with them; for there was scarcely any demand for Orange tunes. Then Dan O'Connell arose with his emancipation and repale cries, and then instead of Orange processions and walkings, there were Papist processions and mobs, which made me afraid to stir out, lest knowing me for an Orange fiddler, they should break my head, as the boys broke my leg at Donnybrook fair. At length some of the repalers and emancipators, knowing that I was a first-rate hand at fiddling, came to me and tould me, that

if I would give over playing Croppies Lie Down and other Orange tunes, and would play Croppies Get Up, and what not, and become a Catholic and a repaler, and an emancipator, they would make a man of me—so as my Orange trade was gone, and I was half-starved, I consinted, not however till they had introduced me to Daniel O'Connell, who called me a cridit to my country, and the Irish Horpheus, and promised me a sovereign if I would consint to join the cause, as he called it. Well, your hanner, I joined with the cause and became a Papist, I mane a Catholic once more, and went at the head of processions, covered all over with green ribbons, playing Croppies Get Up, Granny Whale, and the like. But, your hanner, though I went the whole hog with the repalers and emancipators, they did not make their words good by making a man of me. Scant and sparing were they in the mate and drink, and yet more sparing in the money, and Daniel O'Connell never gave me the sovereign which he promised me. No, your hanner, though I played Croppies Get Up, till my fingers ached, as I stumped before him and his mobs and processions, he never gave me the sovereign: unlike your hanner who gave me the shilling ye promised me for playing Croppies Lie Down, Daniel O'Connell never gave me the sovereign he promised me for playing Croppies Get Up. Och, your hanner, I often wished the ould Orange days were back again. However, as I could do no better I continued going the whole hog with the emancipators and repalers and Dan

O'Connell; I went the whole animal with them till they had got emancipation; and I went the whole animal with them till they had nearly got repale—when all of a sudden they let the whole thing drop—Dan and his party having frighted the Government out of its seven senses, and gotten all they thought they could get, in money and places, which was all they wanted, let the whole hullabaloo drop, and of course myself, who formed part of it. I went to those who had persuaded me to give up my Orange tunes, and to play Papist ones, begging them to give me work; but they tould me very civilly that they had no farther occasion for my services. I went to Daniel O'Connell reminding him of the sovereign he had promised me, and offering if he gave it me to play Croppies Get Up under the nose of the lord-lieutenant himself; but he tould me that he had not time to attend to me, and when I persisted, bade me go to the divil and shake myself. Well, your hanner, seeing no prospect for myself in my own country, and having incurred some little debts for which I feared to be arrested, I came over to England and Wales, where with little content and satisfaction I have passed seven years.'

'Well,' said I, 'thank you for your history—farewell.'

'Stap, your hanner; does your hanner think that the Orange will ever be out of the kennel, and that the Orange boys will ever walk round the brass man and horse in College Green as they did of ould?'

'Who knows?' said I. 'But suppose all that were to happen, what would it signify to you?'

'Why, then, divil be in my patten if I would not go back to Donnybrook and Dublin, hoist the Orange cockade, and become as good an Orange boy as ever.'

'What,' said I, 'and give up Popery for the second time?'

'I would, your hanner; and why not? for in spite of what I have heard Father Toban say, I am by no means certain that all Protestants will be damned.'

'Farewell,' said I.

'Farewell, your hanner, and long life and prosperity to you! God bless your hanner and your Orange face. Ah, the Orange boys are the boys for keeping faith. They never served me as Dan O'Connell and his dirty gang of repalers and emancipators did. Farewell, your hanner, once more; and here 's another scratch of the illigant tune your hanner is so fond of, to cheer up your hanner's ears upon your way.'

And long after I had left him I could hear him playing on his fiddle in first-rate style the beautiful tune of Down, down, Croppies Lie Down.

CHAPTER XXVI

Ceiniog Mawr—Pentre Voelas—The Old Conway—Stupendous Pass—The Gwedir Family—Capel Curig—The Two Children — Bread — Wonderful Echo — Tremendous Walker.

I WALKED on briskly over a flat uninteresting country, and in about an hour's time came in front of a large stone house. It stood near the road, on the left-hand side, with a pond and pleasant trees before it, and a number of corn-stacks behind. It had something the appearance of an inn, but displayed no sign. As I was standing looking at it, a man with the look of a labourer, and with a dog by his side, came out of the house and advanced towards me.

'What is the name of this place?' said I to him in English as he drew nigh.

'Sir,' said the man, 'the name of the house is Ceiniog Mawr.'

'Is it an inn?' said I.

'Not now, sir; but some years ago it was an inn, and a very large one, at which coaches used to stop; at present it is occupied by an amaethwr—that is a farmer, sir.'

'Ceiniog Mawr means a great penny,' said I, 'why is it called by that name?'

'I have heard, sir, that before it was an inn it was a very considerable place, namely a

Royal Mint, at which pennies were made, and on that account it was called Ceiniog Mawr.'

I was subsequently told that the name of this place was Cernioge Mawr. If such be the real name the legend about the mint falls to the ground, Cernioge having nothing to do with pence. Cern in Welsh means a jaw. Perhaps the true name of the house is Corniawg, which interpreted is a place with plenty of turrets or chimneys. A mile or two farther the ground began to rise, and I came to a small village at the entrance of which was a water-wheel—near the village was a gentleman's seat almost surrounded by groves. After I had passed through the village, seeing a woman seated by the roadside knitting, I asked her in English its name. Finding she had no Saesneg I repeated the question in Welsh, whereupon she told me that it was called Pentre Voelas.

'And whom does the "Plas" belong to yonder amongst the groves?' said I.

'It belongs to Mr. Wynn, sir, and so does the village and a great deal of the land about here. A very good gentleman is Mr. Wynn, sir; he is very kind to his tenants and a very good lady is Mrs. Wynn, sir; in the winter she gives much soup to the poor.'

After leaving the village of Pentre Voelas I soon found myself in a wild hilly region. I crossed a bridge over a river, which, brawling and tumbling amidst rocks, shaped its course to the north-east. As I proceeded the country became more and more wild; there were dingles

and hollows in abundance, and fantastic-looking hills some of which were bare and others clad with trees of various kinds. Came to a little well in a cavity dug in a high bank on the left-hand side of the road, and fenced by rude stonework on either side; the well was about ten inches in diameter, and as many deep. Water oozing from the bank upon a slanting tile fastened into the earth fell into it. After damming up the end of the tile with my hand, and drinking some delicious water, I passed on and presently arrived at a cottage, just inside the door of which sat a good-looking, middle-aged woman engaged in knitting, the general occupation of Welsh females.

'Good day,' said I to her in Welsh. 'Fine weather.'

'In truth, sir, it is fine weather for the harvest.'

'Are you alone in the house?'

'I am, sir, my husband has gone to his labour.'

'Have you any children?'

'Two, sir; but they are out at service.'

'What is the name of this place?'

'Pant Paddock, sir.'

'Do you get your water from the little well yonder?'

'We do, sir, and good water it is.'

'I have drunk of it.'

'Much good may what you have drunk do you, sir!'

'What is the name of the river near here?'

'It is called the Conway, sir.'

'Dear me; is that river the Conway?'

'You have heard of it, sir?'

'Heard of it! it is one of the famous rivers of the world. The poets are very fond of it—one of the great poets of my country calls it the old Conway.'

'Is one river older than another, sir?'

'That 's a shrewd question. Can you read?'

'I can, sir.'

'Have you any books?'

'I have the Bible, sir.'

'Will you show it me?'

'Willingly, sir.'

Then getting up she took a book from a shelf and handed it to me, at the same time begging me to enter the house and sit down. I declined, and she again took her seat and resumed her occupation. On opening the book the first words which met my eye were: 'Gad i mi fyned trwy dy dir!' Let me go through your country. (Numb. xx. 22.)

'I may say these words,' said I, pointing to the passage. 'Let me go through your country.'

'No one will hinder you, sir, for you seem a civil gentleman.'

'No one has hindered me hitherto. Wherever I have been in Wales I have experienced nothing but kindness and hospitality, and when I return to my own country I will say so.'

'What country is yours, sir?'

'England. Did you not know that by my tongue?'

'I did not, sir. I knew by your tongue that you were not from our parts—but I did not know that you were an Englishman. I took you for a Cumro of the south country.'

Returning the kind woman her book, and bidding her farewell I departed, and proceeded some miles through a truly magnificent country of wood, rock, and mountain. At length I came to a steep mountain gorge down which the road ran nearly due north, the Conway to the left running with great noise parallel with the road, amongst broken rocks, which chafed it into foam. I was now amidst stupendous hills, whose paps, peaks, and pinnacles seemed to rise to the very heaven. An immense mountain on the right side of the road particularly struck my attention, and on inquiring of a man breaking stones by the roadside I learned that it was called Dinas Mawr, or the large citadel, perhaps from a fort having been built upon it to defend the pass in the old British times. Coming to the bottom of the pass I crossed over by an ancient bridge, and passing through a small town found myself in a beautiful valley with majestic hills on either side. This was the Dyffryn Conway, the celebrated Vale of Conway, to which in the summer time fashionable gentry from all parts of Britain resort for shade and relaxation. When about midway down the valley I turned to the west up one of the grandest passes in the world, having two immense door-posts of rock at the entrance, the northern one probably rising to the altitude of nine hundred feet. On the southern side of this pass near the entrance were neat dwellings for the accommodation of visitors, with cool apartments on the ground floor, with large windows, looking towards the

precipitous side of the mighty northern hill; within them I observed tables, and books, and young men, probably English collegians, seated at study.

After I had proceeded some way up the pass, down which a small river ran, a woman who was standing on the right-hand side of the way, seemingly on the look-out, begged me in broken English to step aside and look at the fall.

'You mean a waterfall, I suppose?' said I.

'Yes, sir.'

'And how do you call it?' said I.

'The Fall of the Swallow, sir.'

'And in Welsh?' said I.

'Rhaiadr y Wennol, sir.'

'And what is the name of the river?' said I.

'We call the river the Lygwy, sir.'

I told the woman I would go, whereupon she conducted me through a gate on the right-hand side and down a path overhung with trees to a rock projecting into the river. The Fall of the Swallow is not a majestic single fall, but a succession of small ones. First there are a number of little foaming torrents, bursting through rocks about twenty yards above the promontory, on which I stood. Then come two beautiful rolls of white water, dashing into a pool a little way above the promontory; then there is a swirl of water round its corner into a pool below on its right, black as death and seemingly of great depth; then a rush through a very narrow outlet into another pool, from which the water clamours away down the glen.

Such is the Rhaiadr y Wennol, or Swallow Fall; called so from the rapidity with which the waters rush and skip along.

On asking the woman on whose property the fall was, she informed me that it was on the property of the Gwedir family. The name of Gwedir brought to my mind the 'History of the Gwedir Family,' a rare and curious book which I had read in my boyhood, and which was written by the representative of that family, a certain Sir John Wynne, about the beginning of the seventeenth century. It gives an account of the fortunes of the family, from its earliest rise; but more particularly after it had emigrated in order to avoid bad neighbours, from a fair and fertile district into rugged Snowdonia, where it found anything but the repose it came in quest of. The book, which is written in bold graphic English, flings considerable light on the state of society in Wales, in the time of the Tudors, a truly deplorable state, as the book is full of accounts of feuds, petty but desperate skirmishes, and revengeful murders. To many of the domestic sagas, or histories of ancient Icelandic families, from the character of the events which it describes and also from the manner in which it describes them, the 'History of the Gwedir Family,' by Sir John Wynne, bears a striking resemblance.

After giving the woman sixpence I left the fall, and proceeded on my way. I presently crossed a bridge under which ran the river of the fall, and was soon in a wide valley on each

side of which were lofty hills dotted with wood, and at the top of which stood a mighty mountain, bare and precipitous, with two paps like those of Pindus opposite Janina, but somewhat sharper It was a region of fairy beauty and of wild grandeur. Meeting an old bleared-eyed farmer, I inquired the name of the mountain and learned that it was called Moel Siabod or Shabod. Shortly after leaving him, I turned from the road to inspect a monticle which appeared to me to have something of the appearance of a burial heap. It stood in a green meadow by the river which ran down the valley on the left. Whether it was a grave hill or a natural monticle, I will not say; but standing in the fair meadow, the rivulet murmuring beside it, and the old mountain looking down upon it, I thought it looked a very meet resting-place for an old Celtic king.

Turning round the northern side of the mighty Siabod I soon reached the village of Capel Curig, standing in a valley between two hills, the easternmost of which is the aforesaid Moel Siabod. Having walked now twenty miles in a broiling day I thought it high time to take some refreshment, and inquired the way to the inn. The inn, or rather the hotel, for it was a very magnificent edifice, stood at the entrance of a pass leading to Snowdon, on the southern side of the valley in a totally different direction from the road leading to Bangor, to which place I was bound. There I dined in a grand saloon amidst a great deal of fashionable company, who, probably conceiving from my heated and

dusty appearance that I was some poor fellow travelling on foot from motives of economy, surveyed me with looks of the most supercilious disdain, which, however, neither deprived me of my appetite nor operated uncomfortably on my feelings.

My dinner finished, I paid my bill, and having sauntered a little about the hotel garden, which is situated on the border of a small lake and from which, through the vista of the pass, Snowdon may be seen towering in majesty at the distance of about six miles, I started for Bangor, which is fourteen miles from Capel Curig.

The road to Bangor from Capel Curig is almost due west. An hour's walking brought me to a bleak moor, extending for a long way amidst wild sterile hills.

The first of a chain on the left was a huge lumpy hill with a precipice towards the road probably three hundred feet high. When I had come nearly parallel with the commencement of this precipice, I saw on the left-hand side of the road two children looking over a low wall behind which at a little distance stood a wretched hovel. On coming up I stopped and looked at them: they were a boy and a girl; the first about twelve, the latter a year or two younger; both wretchedly dressed and looking very sickly.

'Have you any English?' said I, addressing the boy in Welsh.

'Dim gair,' said the boy; 'not a word; there is no Saesneg near here.'

'What is the name of this place?'

'The name of our house is Helyg.'

'And what is the name of that hill?' said I, pointing to the hill of the precipice.

'Allt y Gôg—the high place of the cuckoo.'

'Have you a father and mother?'

'We have.'

'Are they in the house?'

'They are gone to Capel Curig.'

'And they left you alone?'

'They did. With the cat and the trin-wire.'

'Do your father and mother make wire-work?'

'They do. They live by making it.'

'What is the wire-work for?'

'It is for hedges to fence the fields with.'

'Do you help your father and mother?'

'We do; as far as we can.'

'You both look unwell.'

'We have lately had the cryd' (ague).

'Is there much cryd about here?'

'Plenty.'

'Do you live well?'

'When we have bread we live well.'

'If I give you a penny will you bring me some water?'

'We will, whether you give us the penny or not. Come, sister, let us go and fetch the gentleman water.'

They ran into the house and presently returned, the girl bearing a pan of water. After I had drunk I gave each of the children a penny, and received in return from each a diolch or thanks.

'Can either of you read?'

'Neither one nor the other.'

'Can your father and mother read?'

'My father cannot, my mother can a little.'

'Are there books in the house?'

'There are not.'

'No Bible?'

'There is no book at all.'

'Do you go to church?'

'We do not.'

'To chapel?'

'In fine weather.'

'Are you happy?'

'When there is bread in the house and no cryd we are all happy.'

'Farewell to you, children.'

'Farewell to you, gentleman!' exclaimed both.

'I have learnt something,' said I, 'of Welsh cottage life and feeling from that poor sickly child.'

I had passed the first and second of the hills which stood on the left, and a huge long mountain on the right which confronted both, when a young man came down from a gulley on my left hand, and proceeded in the same direction as myself. He was dressed in a blue coat and corduroy trowsers, and appeared to be of a condition a little above that of a labourer. He shook his head and scowled when I spoke to him in English, but smiled on my speaking Welsh, and said: 'Ah, you speak Cumraeg: I thought no Sais could speak Cumraeg.' I asked him if he was going far.

'About four miles,' he replied.

'On the Bangor road?'

'Yes,' said he; 'down the Bangor road.'

I learned that he was a carpenter, and that he had been up the gulley to see an acquaintance —perhaps a sweetheart. We passed a lake on our right which he told me was called Llyn Ogwen, and that it abounded with fish. He was very amusing and expressed great delight at having found an Englishman who could speak Welsh. 'It will be a thing to talk of,' said he, 'for the rest of my life.' He entered two or three cottages by the side of the road, and each time as he came out I heard him say: 'I am with a Sais, who can speak Cumraeg.' At length we came to a gloomy-looking valley trending due north; down this valley the road ran having an enormous wall of rocks on its right and a precipitous hollow on the left, beyond which was a wall equally high as the other one. When we had proceeded some way down the road my guide said, 'You shall now hear a wonderful echo,' and shouting 'taw, taw,' the rocks replied in a manner something like the baying of hounds. 'Hark to the dogs!' exclaimed my companion. 'This pass is called Nant yr ieuanc gwn, the pass of the young dogs, because when one shouts it answers with a noise resembling the crying of hounds.'

The sun was setting when we came to a small village at the bottom of the pass. I asked my companion its name. 'Ty yn y maes,' he replied, adding as he stopped before a small cottage that he was going no farther, as he dwelt there.

'Is there a public-house here?' said I.

'There is,' he replied, 'you will find one a little farther up on the right hand.'

'Come, and take some ale,' said I.

'No,' said he.

'Why not?' I demanded.

'I am a teetotaller,' he replied.

'Indeed,' said I, and, having shaken him by the hand, thanked him for his company and, bidding him farewell, went on. He was the first person I had ever met of the fraternity to which he belonged, who did not endeavour to make a parade of his abstinence and self-denial.

After drinking some tolerably good ale in the public-house I again started. As I left the village a clock struck eight. The evening was delightfully cool; but it soon became nearly dark. I passed under high rocks, by houses and by groves, in which nightingales were singing, to listen to whose entrancing melody I more than once stopped. On coming to a town, lighted up and thronged with people, I asked one of a group of young fellows its name.

'Bethesda,' he replied.

'A scriptural name,' said I.

'Is it?' said he; 'well, if its name is scriptural the manners of its people are by no means so.'

A little way beyond the town a man came out of a cottage and walked beside me. He had a basket in his hand. I quickened my pace; but he was a tremendous walker, and kept up with me. On we went side by side for more than a mile without speaking a word. At

length putting out my legs in genuine Barclay fashion I got before him about ten yards, then turning round, laughed and spoke to him in English. He too laughed and spoke, but in Welsh. We now went on like brothers, conversing, but always walking at great speed. I learned from him that he was a market-gardener living at Bangor, and that Bangor was three miles off. On the stars shining out we began to talk about them.

Pointing to Charles's Wain I said, 'A good star for travellers.'

Whereupon pointing to the North star, he said:

'I forwyr da iawn—a good star for mariners.'

We passed a large house on our left.

'Who lives there?' said I.

'Mr. Smith,' he replied. 'It is called Plas Newydd; milltir genom etto—we have yet another mile.'

In ten minutes we were at Bangor. I asked him where the Albion Hotel was.

'I will show it you,' said he, and so he did.

As we came under it I heard the voice of my wife, for she, standing on a balcony and distinguishing me by the lamplight, called out. I shook hands with the kind, six-mile-an-hour market-gardener, and going into the inn found my wife and daughter, who rejoiced to see me. We presently had tea.

CHAPTER XXVII

Bangor—Edmund Price—The Bridges—Bookselling—Future Pope—Wild Irish—Southey.

BANGOR is seated on the spurs of certain high hills near the Menai, a strait separating Mona or Anglesey from Caernarvonshire. It was once a place of Druidical worship, of which fact, even without the testimony of history and tradition, the name which signifies 'upper circle' would be sufficient evidence. On the decay of Druidism a town sprang up on the site and in the neighbourhood of the 'upper circle,' in which in the sixth century a convent or university was founded by Deiniol, who eventually became Bishop of Bangor. This Deiniol was the son of Deiniol Vawr, a zealous Christian prince who founded the convent of Bangor Is Coed, or Bangor beneath the wood in Flintshire, which was destroyed and its inmates almost to a man put to the sword by Ethelbert, a Saxon king, and his barbarian followers at the instigation of the monk Austin, who hated the brethren because they refused to acknowledge the authority of the Pope, whose delegate he was in Britain. There were in all, three Bangors; the one at Is Coed, another in Powis, and this Caernarvonshire Bangor, which was generally termed Bangor Vawr or Bangor the great. The two first Bangors have fallen into

utter decay, but Bangor Vawr is still a bishop's see, boasts of a small but venerable cathedral, and contains a population of above eight thousand souls.

Two very remarkable men have at different periods conferred a kind of lustre upon Bangor by residing in it, Taliesin in the old, and Edmund Price in comparatively modern time. Both of them were poets. Taliesin flourished about the end of the fifth century, and for the sublimity of his verses was for many centuries called by his countrymen the Bardic King. Amongst his pieces is one generally termed 'The Prophecy of Taliesin,' which announced, long before it happened, the entire subjugation of Britain by the Saxons, and which is perhaps one of the most stirring pieces of poetry ever produced. Edmund Price flourished during the time of Elizabeth. He was archdeacon of Merionethshire, but occasionally resided at Bangor for the benefit of his health. Besides being one of the best Welsh poets of his age he was a man of extraordinary learning, possessing a thorough knowledge of no less than eight languages.

The greater part of his compositions, however clever and elegant, are, it must be confessed, such as do little credit to the pen of an ecclesiastic, being bitter, poignant satires, which were the cause of much pain and misery to individuals; one of his works, however, is not only of a kind quite consistent with his sacred calling, but has been a source of considerable blessing. To him the Cambrian Church is indebted for the version

of the Psalms, which for the last two centuries it has been in the habit of using. Previous to the version of the Archdeacon a translation of the Psalms had been made into Welsh by William Middleton, an officer in the naval service of Queen Elizabeth, in the four-and-twenty alliterative measures of the ancient bards. It was elegant and even faithful, but far beyond the comprehension of people in general, and consequently by no means fitted for the use of churches, though intended for that purpose by the author, a sincere Christian, though a warrior. Avoiding the error into which his predecessor had fallen, the Archdeacon made use of a measure intelligible to people of every degree, in which alliteration is not observed, and which is called by the Welsh y mesur cyffredin, or the common measure. His opinion of the four-and-twenty measures the Archdeacon has given to the world in four cowydd lines to the following effect :—

> 'I 've read the masterpieces great
> Of languages no less than eight,
> But ne'er have found a woof of song
> So strict as that of Cambria's tongue.'

After breakfast on the morning subsequent to my arrival, Henrietta and I roamed about the town, and then proceeded to view the bridges which lead over the strait to Anglesey. One, for common traffic, is a most beautiful suspension bridge completed in 1820, the result of the mental and manual labours of the ingenious Telford ; the other is a tubular railroad bridge, a wonderful structure, no doubt, but anything but graceful.

We remained for some time on the first bridge, admiring the scenery, and were not a little delighted, as we stood leaning over the principal arch, to see a proud vessel pass beneath us at full sail.

Satiated with gazing we passed into Anglesey, and making our way to the tubular bridge, which is to the west of the suspension one, entered one of its passages and returned to the mainland.

The air was exceedingly hot and sultry, and on coming to a stone bench, beneath a shady wall, we both sat down, panting, on one end of it; as we were resting ourselves, a shabby-looking man with a bundle of books came and seated himself at the other end, placing his bundle beside him; then taking out from his pocket a dirty red handkerchief, he wiped his face, which was bathed in perspiration, and ejaculated: 'By Jasus it is blazing hot!'

'Very hot, my friend,' said I; 'have you travelled far to-day?'

'I have not, your hanner; I have been just walking about the dirty town trying to sell my books.'

'Have you been successful?'

'I have not, your hanner; only threepence have I taken this blessed day.'

'What do your books treat of?'

'Why, that is more than I can tell your hanner; my trade is to sell the books not to read them. Would your hanner like to look at them?'

'O dear no,' said I; 'I have long been tired of books; I have had enough of them.'

'I daresay, your hanner; from the state of your hanner's eyes I should say as much; they look so weak—picking up learning has ruined your hanner's sight.'

'May I ask,' said I, 'from what country you are?'

'Sure your hanner may; and it is a civil answer you will get from Michael Sullivan. It is from ould Ireland I am, from Castlebar in the county Mayo.'

'And how came you into Wales?'

'From the hope of bettering my condition, your hanner, and a foolish hope it was.'

'You have not bettered your condition, then?'

'I have not, your hanner; for I suffer quite as much hunger and thirst as ever I did in ould Ireland.'

'Did you sell books in Ireland?'

'I did nat, your hanner; I made buttons and clothes—that is, I pieced them. I was several trades in ould Ireland, your hanner; but none of them answering, I came over here.'

'Where you commenced bookselling?' said I.

'I did nat, your hanner. I first sold laces, and then I sold loocifers, and then something else; I have followed several trades in Wales, your hanner; at last I got into the bookselling trade, in which I now am.'

'And it answers, I suppose, as badly as the others?'

'Just as badly, your hanner; divil a bit better.'

'I suppose you never beg?'

'Your hanner may say that; I was always too proud to beg. It is begging I laves to the wife I have.'

'Then you have a wife?'

'I have, your hanner; and a daughter, too; and a good wife and daughter they are. What would become of me without them I do not know.'

'Have you been long in Wales?'

'Not very long, your hanner; only about twenty years.'

'Do you travel much about?'

'All over North Wales, your hanner; to say nothing of the southern country.'

'I suppose you speak Welsh?'

'Not a word, your hanner. The Welsh speak their language so fast, that divil a word could I ever contrive to pick up.'

'Do you speak Irish?'

'I do, your hanner; that is, when people spake to me in it.'

I spoke to him in Irish; after a little discourse he said in English:

'I see your hanner is a Munster man. Ah! all the learned men comes from Munster. Father Toban comes from Munster.'

'I have heard of him once or twice before,' said I.

'I daresay your hanner has. Every one has heard of Father Toban; the greatest scholar in the world, who they say stands a better chance of being made Pope, some day or other, than any saggart in Ireland.'

'Will you take sixpence?'

'I will, your hanner; if your hanner offers it; but I never beg; I leave that kind of work to my wife and daughter, as I said before.'

After giving him the sixpence, which he received with a lazy 'thank your hanner,' I got up, and followed by my daughter returned to the town.

Henrietta went to the inn, and I again strolled about the town. As I was standing in the middle of one of the busiest streets I suddenly heard a loud and dissonant gabbling, and glancing around beheld a number of wild-looking people, male and female. Wild looked the men, yet wilder the women. The men were very lightly clad, and were all barefooted and bareheaded; they carried stout sticks in their hands. The women were barefooted too, but had for the most part head-dresses; their garments consisted of blue cloaks and striped gingham gowns. All the females had common tin articles in their hands which they offered for sale with violent gestures to the people in the streets, as they walked along, occasionally darting into the shops, from which, however, they were almost invariably speedily ejected by the startled proprietors, with looks of disgust and almost horror. Two ragged, red-haired lads led a gaunt pony, drawing a creaking cart, stored with the same kind of articles of tin, which the women bore. Poorly clad, dusty and soiled as they were, they all walked with a free, independent, and almost graceful carriage.

'Are those people from Ireland?' said I to a decent-looking man, seemingly a mechanic, who stood near me, and was also looking at them, but with anything but admiration.

'I am sorry to say they are, sir,' said the man, who from his accent was evidently an Irishman, 'for they are a disgrace to their country.'

I did not exactly think so. I thought that in many respects they were fine specimens of humanity.

'Every one of those wild fellows,' said I to myself, 'is worth a dozen of the poor mean-spirited book-tramper I have lately been discoursing with.'

In the afternoon I again passed over into Anglesey, but this time not by the bridge but by the ferry on the north-east of Bangor, intending to go to Beaumaris, about two or three miles distant; an excellent road, on the left side of which is a high bank fringed with dwarf oaks, and on the right the Menai strait, leads to it. Beaumaris is at present a watering-place. On one side of it, close upon the sea, stand the ruins of an immense castle, once a Norman stronghold, but built on the site of a palace belonging to the ancient kings of North Wales, and a favourite residence of the celebrated Owain Gwynedd, the father of the yet more celebrated Madoc, the original discoverer of America. I proceeded at once to the castle and, clambering to the top of one of the turrets, looked upon Beaumaris Bay, and the noble rocky coast of the mainland

to the south-east beyond it, the most remarkable object of which is the gigantic Penman Mawr, which interpreted is 'the great head-stone,' the termination of a range of craggy hills descending from the Snowdon mountains.

'What a bay!' said I, 'for beauty it is superior to the far-famed one of Naples. A proper place for the keels to start from, which, unguided by the compass, found their way over the mighty and mysterious Western Ocean.'

I repeated all the Bardic lines I could remember connected with Madoc's expedition, and likewise many from the Madoc of Southey, not the least of Britain's four great latter poets, decidedly her best prose writer, and probably the purest and most noble character to which she has ever given birth; and then, after a long, lingering look, descended from my altitude, and returned, not by the ferry, but by the suspension bridge to the mainland.

CHAPTER XXVIII

Robert Lleiaf—Prophetic Englyn—The Second Sight—Duncan Campbell—Nial's Saga—Family of Nial—Gunnar—The Avenger.

'Av i dir Môn, er dwr Menai,
Tros y traeth, ond aros trai.'

'I will go to the land of Mona, notwithstanding the water of the Menai, across the sand, without waiting for the ebb.'

So sang a bard about two hundred and forty years ago, who styled himself Robert Lleiaf, or the least of the Roberts. The meaning of the couplet has always been considered to be, and doubtless is, that a time would come when a bridge would be built across the Menai, over which one might pass with safety and comfort, without waiting till the ebb was sufficiently low to permit people to pass over the traeth, or sand, which, from ages the most remote, had been used as the means of communication between the mainland and the Isle of Mona or Anglesey. Grounding their hopes upon that couplet, people were continually expecting to see a bridge across the Menai: more than two hundred years, however, elapsed before the expectation was fulfilled by the mighty Telford flinging over the strait an iron suspension bridge, which, for grace and beauty, has perhaps no rival in Europe.

The couplet is a remarkable one. In the time of its author there was nobody in Britain capable

of building a bridge, which could have stood against the tremendous surges which occasionally vex the Menai; yet the couplet gives intimation that a bridge over the Menai there would be, which clearly argues a remarkable foresight in the author, a feeling that a time would at length arrive when the power of science would be so far advanced, that men would be able to bridge over the terrible strait. The length of time which intervened between the composition of the couplet and the fulfilment of the promise, shows that a bridge over the Menai was no pont y meibion, no children's bridge, nor a work for common men. O, surely Lleiaf was a man of great foresight!

A man of great foresight, but nothing more; he foretold a bridge over the Menai, when no one could have built one, a bridge over which people could pass, aye, and carts and horses; we will allow him the credit of foretelling such a bridge; and when Telford's bridge was flung over the Menai, Lleiaf's couplet was verified. But since Telford's, another bridge has been built over the Menai, which enables things to pass which the bard certainly never dreamt of. He never hinted at a bridge over which thundering trains would dash, if required, at the rate of fifty miles an hour; he never hinted at steam travelling, or a railroad bridge, and the second bridge over the Menai is one.

That Lleiaf was a man of remarkable foresight cannot be denied, but there are no grounds which entitle him to be considered a possessor

of the second sight. He foretold a bridge, but not a railroad bridge; had he foretold a railroad bridge, or hinted at the marvels of steam, his claim to the second sight would have been incontestable.

What a triumph for Wales; what a triumph for bardism, if Lleiaf had ever written an englyn, or couplet, in which not a bridge for common traffic, but a railroad bridge over the Menai was hinted at, and steam travelling distinctly foretold! Well, though Lleiaf did not write it, there exists in the Welsh language an englyn, almost as old as Lleiaf's time, in which steam travelling in Wales and Anglesea is foretold, and in which, though the railroad bridge over the Menai is not exactly mentioned, it may be considered to be included; so that Wales and bardism have equal reason to be proud. This is the englyn alluded to:—

'Codais, ymolchais yn Môn, cyn naw awr
Ciniewa 'n Nghaer Lleon,
Pryd gosber yn y Werddon,
Prydnawn wrth dan mawn yn Môn.'

The above englyn was printed in the Greal, 1792, p. 316; the language shows it to be a production of about the middle of the seventeenth century. The following is nearly a literal translation:—

'I got up in Mona as soon as 'twas light,
At nine in old Chester my breakfast I took;
In Ireland I dined, and in Mona, ere night,
By the turf fire sat, in my own ingle nook.'

Now, as sure as the couplet by Robert Lleiaf

foretells that a bridge would eventually be built over the strait, by which people would pass, and traffic be carried on, so surely does the above englyn foreshadow the speed by which people would travel by steam, a speed by which distance is already all but annihilated. At present it is easy enough to get up at dawn at Holyhead, the point of Anglesey the most distant from Chester, and to breakfast at that old town by nine; and though the feat has never yet been accomplished, it would be quite possible, provided proper preparations were made, to start from Holyhead at daybreak, breakfast at Chester at nine, or before, dine in Ireland at two, and get back again to Holyhead ere the sun of the longest day has set. And as surely as the couplet about the bridge argues great foresight in the man that wrote it, so surely does the englyn prove that its author must have been possessed of the faculty of second sight, as nobody without it could, in the middle of the seventeenth century, when the powers of steam were unknown, have written anything in which travelling by steam is so distinctly alluded to.

Truly some old bard of the seventeenth century must in a vision of the second sight have seen the railroad bridge across the Menai, the Chester train dashing across it, at high railroad speed, and a figure exactly like his own seated comfortably in a third-class carriage.

And now a few words on the second sight, a few calm, quiet words, in which there is not the

slightest wish to display either eccentricity or book-learning.

The second sight is the power of seeing events before they happen, or of seeing events which are happening far beyond the reach of the common sight, or between which and the common sight barriers intervene, which it cannot pierce. The number of those who possess this gift or power is limited, and perhaps no person ever possessed it in a perfect degree: some more frequently see coming events, or what is happening at a distance, than others; some see things dimly, others with great distinctness. The events seen are sometimes of great importance, sometimes highly nonsensical and trivial; sometimes they relate to the person who sees them, sometimes to other people. This is all that can be said with anything like certainty with respect to the nature of the second sight, a faculty for which there is no accounting, which, were it better developed, might be termed the sixth sense.

The second sight is confined to no particular country, and has at all times existed. Particular nations have obtained a celebrity for it for a time, which they have afterwards lost, the celebrity being transferred to other nations, who were previously not noted for the faculty. The Jews were at one time particularly celebrated for the possession of the second sight; they are no longer so. The power was at one time very common amongst the Icelanders and the inhabitants of the Hebrides, but it is so no longer.

Many and extraordinary instances of the second sight have lately occurred in that part of England generally termed East Anglia, where in former times the power of the second sight seldom manifested itself.

There are various books in existence in which the second sight is treated of or mentioned. Amongst others there is one called 'Martin's Visit to the Hebrides,' published in the year 1700, which is indeed the book from which most writers in English, who have treated of the second sight, have derived their information. The author gives various anecdotes of the second sight, which he had picked up during his visits to those remote islands, which until the publication of his tour were almost unknown to the world. It will not be amiss to observe here that the term second sight is of Lowland Scotch origin, and first made its appearance in print in Martin's book. The Gaelic term for the faculty is taibhsearachd, the literal meaning of which is what is connected with a spectral appearance, the root of the word being taibhse, a spectral appearance or vision.

Then there is the 'History of Duncan Campbell.' The father of this person was a native of Shetland, who being shipwrecked on the coast of Swedish Lapland, and hospitably received by the natives, married a woman of the country, by whom he had Duncan, who was born deaf and dumb. On the death of his mother the child was removed by his father to Scotland, where he was educated and taught the use of the finger alphabet,

by means of which people are enabled to hold discourse with each other, without moving the lips or tongue. This alphabet was originally invented in Scotland, and at the present day is much in use there, not only amongst dumb people, but many others, who employ it as a silent means of communication. Nothing is more usual than to see passengers in a common conveyance in Scotland discoursing with their fingers. Duncan at an early period gave indications of possessing the second sight. After various adventures he came to London, where for many years he practised as a fortune-teller, pretending to answer all questions, whether relating to the past or the future, by means of the second sight. There can be no doubt that this man was to a certain extent an impostor; no person exists having a thorough knowledge either of the past or future by means of the second sight, which only visits particular people by fits and starts, and which is quite independent of individual will; but it is equally certain that he disclosed things which no person could have been acquainted with without visitations of the second sight. His papers fell into the hands of Defoe, who wrought them up in his own peculiar manner, and gave them to the world under the title of the 'Life of Mr. Duncan Campbell, the Deaf and Dumb Gentleman,' with an appendix containing many anecdotes of the second sight from Martin's tour.

But by far the most remarkable book in existtence, connected with the second sight, is one in

the ancient Norse language entitled 'Nial's Saga.'[1] It was written in Iceland about the year 1200, and contains the history of a certain Nial and his family, and likewise notices of various other people. This Nial was what was called a spámadr, that is, a spaeman or a person capable of foretelling events. He was originally a heathen—when, however, Christianity was introduced into Iceland, he was amongst the first to embrace it, and persuaded his family and various people of his acquaintance to do the same, declaring that a new faith was necessary, the old religion of Odin, Thor and Frey being quite unsuited to the times. The book is no romance, but a domestic history compiled from tradition about two hundred years after the events which it narrates had taken place. Of its style, which is wonderfully terse, the following translated account of Nial and his family will perhaps convey some idea :—

'There was a man called Nial, who was the son of Thorgeir Gelling, the son of Thorolf. The mother of Nial was called Asgerdr ; she was the daughter of Ar, the Silent, the Lord of a district in Norway. She had come over to Iceland and settled down on land to the west of Markarfliot, between Oldustein and Selialandsmul. Holtathorir was

[1] One or two of the characters and incidents in this Saga are mentioned in the 'Romany Rye' (London, 1857), vol. i. p. 240 ; vol. ii. p. 150.

A partial translation of the Saga, made by myself, has been many years in existence. It forms part of a mountain of unpublished translations from the Northern languages. In my younger days no London publisher, or indeed magazine editor, would look at anything from the Norse, Danish, etc.

her son, father of Thorleif Krak, from whom the Skogverjars are come, and likewise of Thorgrim the big and Skorargeir. Nial dwelt at Bergthorshvâl in Landey, but had another house at Thorolfell. Nial was very rich in property, and handsome to look at, but had no beard. He was so great a lawyer, that it was impossible to find his equal, he was very wise, and had the gift of foretelling events, he was good at counsel, and of a good disposition, and whatever counsel he gave people was for their best; he was gentle and humane, and got every man out of trouble who came to him in his need. His wife was called Bergthora; she was the daughter of Skarphethin. She was a bold-spirited woman who feared nobody, and was rather rough of temper. They had six children, three daughters and three sons, all of whom will be frequently mentioned in this saga.'

In the history many instances are given of Nial's skill in giving good advice, and his power of seeing events before they happened. Nial lived in Iceland during most singular times, in which though there were laws provided for every possible case, no man could have redress for any injury unless he took it himself, or his friends took it for him, simply because there were no ministers of justice supported by the State, authorized and empowered to carry the sentence of the law into effect. For example, if a man were slain his death would remain unpunished, unless he had a son or a brother or some other relation to slay the slayer, or to

force him to pay 'bod,' that is, amends in money, to be determined by the position of the man who was slain. Provided the man who was slain had relations, his death was generally avenged, as it was considered the height of infamy in Iceland to permit one's relations to be murdered, without slaying their murderers, or obtaining bod from them. The right, however, permitted to relations of taking with their own hands the lives of those who had slain their friends, produced incalculable mischiefs; for if the original slayer had friends, they, in the event of his being slain in retaliation for what he had done, made it a point of honour to avenge his death, so that by the lex talionis, feuds were perpetuated. Nial was a great benefactor to his countrymen, by arranging matters between people at variance, in which he was much helped by his knowledge of the law, and by giving wholesome advice to people in precarious situations, in which he was frequently helped by the power which he possessed of the second sight. On several occasions, he settled the disputes in which his friend Gunnar was involved, a noble, generous character, and the champion of Iceland, but who had a host of foes, envious of his renown; and it was not his fault if Gunnar was eventually slain, for if the advice which he gave had been followed, the champion would have died an old man; and if his own sons had followed his advice, and not been over-fond of taking vengeance on people who had wronged them, they would have escaped a horrible death, in which

he himself was involved, as he had always foreseen he should be.

'Dost thou know by what death thou thyself wilt die?' said Gunnar to Nial, after the latter had been warning him that if he followed a certain course he would die by a violent death.

'I do,' said Nial.

'What is it?' said Gunnar.

'What people would think the least probable,' replied Nial.

He meant that he should die by fire. The kind generous Nial, who tried to get everybody out of difficulty, perished by fire. His sons by their violent conduct had incensed numerous people against them. The house in which they lived with their father was beset at night by an armed party, who, unable to break into it owing to the desperate resistance which they met with from the sons of Nial, Skarphethin, Helgi and Grimmr and a comrade of theirs called Kari,[1] set it in a blaze, in which perished Nial, the lawyer and man of the second sight, his wife Bergthora, and two of their sons, the third, Helgi, having been previously slain, and Kari, who was destined to be the avenger of the ill-fated family, having made his escape, after performing deeds of heroism, which for centuries after were the themes of song and tale in the ice-bound isle.

[1] All these three names are very common in Norfolk, the population of which is of Norse origin. Skarphethin is at present pronounced Sharpin, Helgi Heely. Skarphethin, interpreted, is a keen pirate.

CHAPTER XXIX

Snowdon—Caernarvon—Maxen Wledig—Moel y Cynghorion—The Wyddfa—Snow of Snowdon—Rare Plant.

On the third morning after our arrival at Bangor we set out for Snowdon.

Snowdon or Eryri is no single hill, but a mountainous region, the loftiest part of which, called Y Wyddfa, nearly four thousand feet above the level of the sea, is generally considered to be the highest point of Southern Britain. The name Snowdon was bestowed upon this region by the early English on account of its snowy appearance in winter; Eryri by the Britons, because in the old time it abounded with eagles, Eryri [1] in the ancient British language signifying an eyrie or breeding-place of eagles.

Snowdon is interesting on various accounts. It is interesting for its picturesque beauty. Perhaps in the whole world there is no region more picturesquely beautiful than Snowdon, a region of mountains, lakes, cataracts and groves, in which Nature shows herself in her most grand and beautiful forms.

It is interesting from its connection with history: it was to Snowdon that Vortigern

[1] Eryri likewise signifies an excrescence or scrofulous eruption. It is possible that many will be disposed to maintain that in the case of Snowdon the word is intended to express a rugged excrescence or eruption on the surface of the earth.

retired from the fury of his own subjects, caused by the favour which he showed to the detested Saxons. It was there that he called to his counsels Merlin, said to be begotten on a hag by an incubus, but who was in reality the son of a Roman consul by a British woman. It was in Snowdon that he built the castle, which he fondly deemed would prove impregnable, but which his enemies destroyed by flinging wild-fire over its walls; and it was in a wind-beaten valley of Snowdon, near the sea, that his dead body decked in green armour had a mound of earth and stones raised over it. It was on the heights of Snowdon that the brave but unfortunate Llywelin ap Griffith made his last stand for Cambrian independence; and it was to Snowdon that that very remarkable man, Owen Glendower, retired with his irregular bands before Harry the Fourth and his numerous and disciplined armies, soon however, to emerge from its defiles and follow the foe, retreating less from the Welsh arrows from the crags, than from the cold, rain and starvation of the Welsh hills.

But it is from its connection with romance that Snowdon derives its chief interest. Who, when he thinks of Snowdon, does not associate it with the heroes of romance, Arthur and his knights? whose fictitious adventures, the splendid dreams of Welsh and Breton minstrels, many of the scenes of which are the valleys and passes of Snowdon, are the origin of romance, before which what is classic has for more than half a century been waning, and is perhaps

eventually destined to disappear. Yes, to romance Snowdon is indebted for its interest and consequently for its celebrity; but for romance Snowdon would assuredly not be what it at present is, one of the very celebrated hills of the world, and to the poets of modern Europe almost what Parnassus was to those of old.

To the Welsh, besides being the hill of the Awen or Muse, it has always been the hill of hills, the loftiest of all mountains, the one whose snow is the coldest, to climb to whose peak is the most difficult of all feats; and the one whose fall will be the most astounding catastrophe of the last day.

To view this mountain I and my little family set off in a calèche on the third morning after our arrival at Bangor.

Our first stage was to Caernarvon. As I subsequently made a journey to Caernarvon on foot, I shall say nothing about the road till I give an account of that expedition, save that it lies for the most part in the neighbourhood of the sea. We reached Caernarvon, which is distant ten miles from Bangor, about eleven o'clock, and put up at an inn to refresh ourselves and the horses. It is a beautiful little town situated on the southern side of the Menai Strait at nearly its western extremity. It is called Caernarvon, because it is opposite Mona or Anglesey: Caernarvon signifying the town or castle opposite Mona. Its principal feature is its grand old castle, fronting the north, and partly surrounded by the sea. This castle was built by Edward

the First after the fall of his brave adversary Llewelyn, and in it was born his son Edward, whom, when an infant, he induced the Welsh chieftains to accept as their prince without seeing, by saying that the person whom he proposed to be their sovereign was one who was not only born in Wales, but could not speak a word of the English language. The town of Caernarvon, however, existed long before Edward's time, and was probably originally a Roman station. According to Welsh tradition it was built by Maxen Wledig or Maxentius, in honour of his wife Ellen who was born in the neighbourhood. Maxentius, who was a Briton by birth, and partly by origin, contested unsuccessfully the purple with Gratian and Valentinian, and to support his claim led over to the Continent an immense army of Britons, who never returned, but on the fall of their leader settled down in that part of Gaul generally termed Armorica, which means a maritime region, but which the Welsh call Llydaw, or Lithuania, which was the name, or something like the name, which the region bore when Maxen's army took possession of it, owing, doubtless, to its having been the quarters of a legion composed of barbarians from the country of Leth or Lithuania.

After staying about an hour at Caernarvon we started for Llanberis, a few miles to the east. Llanberis is a small village situated in a valley, and takes its name from Peris, a British saint of the sixth century, son of Helig ab Glanog. The valley extends from west to east, having the great

mountain of Snowdon on its south, and a range of immense hills on its northern side. We entered this valley by a pass called Nant y Glo, or the ravine of the coal, and passing a lake on our left, on which I observed a solitary corracle, with a fisherman in it, were presently at the village. Here we got down at a small inn, and having engaged a young lad to serve as guide, I set out with Henrietta to ascend the hill, my wife remaining behind, not deeming herself sufficiently strong to encounter the fatigue of the expedition.

Pointing with my finger to the head of Snowdon towering a long way from us in the direction of the east, I said to Henrietta :—

'Dacw Eryri, yonder is Snowdon. Let us try to get to the top. The Welsh have a proverb : "It is easy to say yonder is Snowdon ; but not so easy to ascend it.' Therefore I would advise you to brace up your nerves and sinews for the attempt.'

We then commenced the ascent, arm in arm, followed by the lad, I singing at the stretch of my voice a celebrated Welsh stanza, in which the proverb about Snowdon is given, embellished with a fine moral, and which may thus be rendered :—

'Easy to say "Behold Eryri,"
But difficult to reach its head ;
Easy for him whose hopes are cheery
To bid the wretch be comforted.'

We were far from being the only visitors to the hill this day ; groups of people, or single indi-

viduals, might be seen going up or descending the path as far as the eye could reach. The path was remarkably good, and for some way the ascent was anything but steep. On our left was the vale of Llanberis, and on our other side a broad hollow, or valley of Snowdon, beyond which were two huge hills forming part of the body of the grand mountain, the lowermost of which our guide told me was called Moel Elia, and the uppermost Moel y Cynghorion. On we went until we had passed both these hills, and come to the neighbourhood of a great wall of rocks constituting the upper region of Snowdon, and where the real difficulty of the ascent commences. Feeling now rather out of breath we sat down on a little knoll with our faces to the south, having a small lake near us, on our left hand, which lay dark and deep, just under the great wall.

Here we sat for some time resting and surveying the scene which presented itself to us, the principal object of which was the north-eastern side of the mighty Moel y Cynghorion, across the wide hollow or valley, which it overhangs in the shape of a sheer precipice some five hundred feet in depth. Struck by the name of Moel y Cynghorion, which in English signifies the hill of the counsellors, I inquired of our guide why the hill was so called, but as he could afford me no information on the point, I presumed that it was either called the hill of the counsellors from the Druids having held high consultation on its top, in time of old, or from the unfortunate Llewelyn

having consulted there with his chieftains, whilst his army lay encamped in the vale below.

Getting up we set about surmounting what remained of the ascent. The path was now winding and much more steep than it had hitherto been. I was at one time apprehensive that my gentle companion would be obliged to give over the attempt; the gallant girl, however, persevered, and in little more than twenty minutes from the time when we arose from our resting-place under the crags, we stood, safe and sound, though panting, upon the very top of Snowdon, the far-famed Wyddfa.

The Wyddfa is about thirty feet in diameter and is surrounded on three sides by a low wall. In the middle of it is a rude cabin, in which refreshments are sold, and in which a person resides throughout the year, though there are few or no visitors to the hill's top, except during the months of summer. Below on all sides are frightful precipices except on the side of the west. Towards the east it looks perpendicularly into the dyffrin or vale, nearly a mile below, from which to the gazer it is at all times an object of admiration, of wonder and almost of fear.

There we stood on the Wyddfa, in a cold, bracing atmosphere, though the day was almost stiflingly hot in the regions from which we had ascended. There we stood enjoying a scene inexpressibly grand, comprehending a considerable part of the mainland of Wales, the whole of Anglesey, a faint glimpse of part of Cumberland; the Irish Channel, and what might be

either a misty creation or the shadowy outline of the hills of Ireland. Peaks and pinnacles and huge moels stood up here and there, about us and below us, partly in glorious light, partly in deep shade. Manifold were the objects which we saw from the brow of Snowdon, but of all the objects which we saw, those which filled us with most delight and admiration, were numerous lakes and lagoons, which, like sheets of ice or polished silver, lay reflecting the rays of the sun in the deep valleys at his feet.

'Here,' said I to Henrietta, 'you are on the top crag of Snowdon, which the Welsh consider, and perhaps with justice, to be the most remarkable crag in the world; which is mentioned in many of their old wild romantic tales, and some of the noblest of their poems, amongst others in the "Day of Judgment," by the illustrious Goronwy Owen, where it is brought forward in the following manner:

Ail i'r ar ael Eryri,
Cyfartal hoewal a hi.

'"The brow of Snowdon shall be levelled with the ground, and the eddying waters shall murmur round it."

'You are now on the top crag of Snowdon, generally termed Y Wyddfa,[1] which means a conspicuous place or tumulus, and which is generally in winter covered with snow; about

[1] It will not be amiss to observe that the original term is gwyddfa; but gwyddfa being a feminine noun or compound commencing with g, which is a mutable consonant, loses the initial letter before y the definite article—you say Gwyddfa a tumulus, but not y gwyddfa *the* tumulus.

which snow there are in the Welsh language two curious englynion or stanzas, consisting entirely of vowels, with the exception of one consonant, namely the letter R.

Oer yw'r Eira ar Eryri,—o'ryw
Ar awyr i rewi;
Oer yw 'r ia ar riw 'r ri,
A'r Eira oer yw 'Ryri.

O Ri y'Ryri yw'r oera,—o'r âr,
Ar oror wir arwa;
O'r awyr a yr Eira,
O'i ryw i roi rew a'r ia.

' " Cold is the snow on Snowdon's brow
It makes the air so chill;
For cold, I trow, there is no snow
Like that of Snowdon's hill.

A hill most chill is Snowdon's hill,
And wintry is his brow;
From Snowdon's hill the breezes chill
Can freeze the very snow." '

Such was the harangue which I uttered on the top of Snowdon; to which Henrietta listened with attention; three or four English, who stood nigh, with grinning scorn, and a Welsh gentleman with considerable interest. The latter coming forward shook me by the hand exclaiming:

'Wyt ti Lydaueg?'

'I am not a Llydauan,' said I; 'I wish I was, or anything but what I am, one of a nation amongst whom any knowledge save what relates to money-making and over-reaching is looked upon as a disgrace. I am ashamed to say that I am an Englishman.'

I then returned his shake of the hand; and, bidding Henrietta and the guide follow me, went into the cabin, where Henrietta had some excellent coffee, and myself and the guide a bottle of tolerable ale; very much refreshed we set out on our return.

A little way from the top, on the right-hand side as you descend, there is a very steep path running down in a zig-zag manner to the pass which leads to Capel Curig. Up this path it is indeed a task of difficulty to ascend to the Wyddfa, the one by which we mounted being comparatively easy. On Henrietta's pointing out to me a plant, which grew on a crag by the side of this path some way down, I was about to descend in order to procure it for her, when our guide springing forward darted down the path with the agility of a young goat, and in less than a minute returned with it in his hand and presented it gracefully to the dear girl, who on examining it said it belonged to a species of which she had long been desirous of possessing a specimen. Nothing material occurred in our descent to Llanberis, where my wife was anxiously awaiting us. The ascent and descent occupied four hours. About ten o'clock at night we again found ourselves at Bangor.

CHAPTER XXX

Gronwy Owen—Struggles of Genius—The Stipend.

THE day after our expedition to Snowdon I and my family parted; they returning by railroad to Chester and Llangollen, whilst I took a trip into Anglesey to visit the birthplace of the great poet Goronwy Owen, whose works I had read with enthusiasm in my early years.

Goronwy or Gronwy Owen was born in the year 1722, at a place called Llanfair Mathafarn Eithaf in Anglesey. He was the eldest of three children. His parents were peasants and so exceedingly poor that they were unable to send him to school. Even, however, when an unlettered child he gave indications that he was visited by the awen or muse. At length the celebrated Lewis Morris, chancing to be at Llanfair, became acquainted with the boy and, struck with his natural talents, determined that he should have all the benefit which education could bestow. He accordingly, at his own expense, sent him to school at Beaumaris, where he displayed a remarkable aptitude for the acquisition of learning. He subsequently sent him to Jesus College, Oxford, and supported him there whilst studying for the Church. Whilst at Jesus, Gronwy distinguished himself as a Greek and Latin scholar, and gave such proofs of poetical

talent in his native language, that he was looked upon by his countrymen of that Welsh college as the rising bard of the age. After completing his collegiate course he returned to Wales, where he was ordained a minister of the Church in the year 1745. The next seven years of his life were a series of cruel disappointments and pecuniary embarrassments. The grand wish of his heart was to obtain a curacy and to settle down in Wales. Certainly a very reasonable wish. To say nothing of his being a great genius, he was eloquent, highly learned, modest, meek, and of irreproachable morals, yet Gronwy Owen could obtain no Welsh curacy, nor could his friend Lewis Morris, though he exerted himself to the utmost, procure one for him. It is true that he was told that he might go to Llanfair, his native place, and officiate there at a time when the curacy happened to be vacant, and thither he went, glad at heart to get back amongst his old friends, who enthusiastically welcomed him; yet scarcely had he been there three weeks when he received notice from the Chaplain of the Bishop of Bangor that he must vacate Llanfair in order to make room for a Mr. John Ellis, a young clergyman of large independent fortune, who was wishing for a curacy under the Bishop of Bangor, Doctor Hutton—so poor Gronwy the eloquent, the learned, the meek, was obliged to vacate the pulpit of his native place to make room for the rich young clergyman, who wished to be within dining distance of the palace of Bangor. Truly in this world the full shall be

crammed, and those who have little shall have the little which they have taken away from them. Unable to obtain employment in Wales, Gronwy sought for it in England, and after some time procured the curacy of Oswestry in Shropshire, where he married a respectable young woman, who eventually brought him two sons and a daughter.

From Oswestry he went to Donnington near Shrewsbury, where, under a certain Scotchman named Douglas, who was an absentee, and who died Bishop of Salisbury, he officiated as curate and master of a grammar school for a stipend—always grudgingly and contumeliously paid—of three-and-twenty pounds a year. From Donnington he removed to Walton in Cheshire, where he lost his daughter who was carried off by a fever. His next removal was to Northolt, a pleasant village in the neighbourhood of London.

He held none of his curacies long, either losing them from the caprice of his principals, or being compelled to resign them from the parsimony which they practised towards him. In the year 1756 he was living in a garret in London, vainly soliciting employment in his sacred calling, and undergoing with his family the greatest privations. At length his friend Lewis Morris, who had always assisted him to the utmost of his ability, procured him the mastership of a government school at New Brunswick in North America, with a salary of three hundred pounds a year. Thither he went with his wife and family, and there he died some time about the year 1780.

He was the last of the great poets of Cambria, and with the exception of Ab Gwilym, the greatest which she has produced. His poems which for a long time had circulated through Wales, in manuscript, were first printed in the year 1819. They are composed in the ancient Bardic measures, and were with one exception, namely, an elegy on the death of his benefactor Lewis Morris, which was transmitted from the New World, written before he had attained the age of thirty-five. All his pieces are excellent, but his masterwork is decidedly the 'Cywydd y Farn' or 'Day of Judgment.' This poem, which is generally considered by the Welsh as the brightest ornament of their ancient language, was composed at Donnington, a small hamlet in Shropshire on the north-west spur of the Wrekin, at which place, as has been already said, Gronwy toiled as schoolmaster and curate under Douglas the Scot, for a stipend of three-and-twenty pounds a year.

CHAPTER XXXI

Start for Anglesey—The Postmaster—Asking Questions—Mynydd Lydiart—Mr. Pritchard—Way to Llanfair.

When I started from Bangor, to visit the birthplace of Gronwy Owen, I by no means saw my way clearly before me. I knew that he was born in Anglesey, in a parish called Llanfair Mathafarn eithaf, that is, St. Mary's of farther Mathafarn—but as to where this Mathafarn lay, north or south, near or far, I knew positively nothing. Passing through the northern suburb of Bangor I saw a small house in front of which was written 'Post Office' in white letters; before this house underneath a shrub in a little garden sat an old man reading. Thinking that from this person, whom I judged to be the postmaster, I was as likely to obtain information with respect to the place of my destination as from any one, I stopped and, taking off my hat for a moment, inquired whether he could tell me anything about the direction of a place called Llanfair Mathafarn eithaf. He did not seem to understand my question, for getting up he came toward me and asked what I wanted: I repeated what I had said, whereupon his face became animated.

'Llanfair Mathafarn eithaf!' said he. 'Yes, I can tell you about it, and with good reason, for it lies not far from the place where I was born.'

The above was the substance of what he said, and nothing more, for he spoke in English somewhat broken.

'And how far is Llanfair from here?' said I.

'About ten miles,' he replied.

'That's nothing,' said I; 'I was afraid it was much farther.'

'Do you call ten miles nothing,' said he, 'in a burning day like this? I think you will be both tired and thirsty before you get to Llanfair, supposing you go there on foot. But what may your business be at Llanfair?' said he, looking at me inquisitively. 'It is a strange place to go to, unless you go to buy hogs or cattle.'

'I go to buy neither hogs nor cattle,' said I, 'though I am somewhat of a judge of both; I go on a more important errand, namely, to see the birthplace of the great Gronwy Owen.'

'Are you any relation of Gronwy Owen?' said the old man, looking at me more inquisitively than before, through a large pair of spectacles which he wore.

'None whatever,' said I.

'Then why do you go to see his parish, it is a very poor one.'

'From respect to his genius,' said I; 'I read his works long ago, and was delighted with them.'

'Are you a Welshman?' said the old man.

'No,' said I, 'I am no Welshman.'

'Can you speak Welsh?' said he, addressing me in that language.

'A little,' said I; 'but not so well as I can read it.'

'Well,' said the old man, 'I have lived here a great many years, but never before did a Saxon call upon me, asking questions about Gronwy Owen, or his birthplace. Immortality to his memory! I owe much to him, for reading his writings taught me to be a poet!'

'Dear me!' said I, 'are you a poet?'

'I trust I am,' said he; 'though the humblest of Ynys Fon.'

A flash of proud fire, methought, illumined his features as he pronounced these last words.

'I am most happy to have met you,' said I; 'but tell me how am I to get to Llanfair?'

'You must go first,' said he, 'to Traeth Coch which in Saxon is called the "Red Sand." In the village called the Pentraeth, which lies above that sand, I was born; through the village and over the bridge you must pass, and after walking four miles due north you will find yourself in Llanfair eithaf, at the northern extremity of Mon. Farewell! That ever Saxon should ask me about Gronwy Owen, and his birthplace! I scarcely believe you to be a Saxon, but whether you be or not, I repeat farewell.'

Coming to the Menai Bridge I asked the man who took the penny toll at the entrance, the way to Pentraeth Coch.

'You see that white house by the wood,' said he, pointing some distance into Anglesey; 'you must make towards it till you come to a place where there are four cross-roads and then you must take the road to the right.'

Passing over the bridge I made my way

towards the house by the wood which stood on the hill, till I came where the four roads met, when I turned to the right as directed.

The country through which I passed seemed tolerably well cultivated, the hedgerows were very high, seeming to spring out of low stone walls. I met two or three gangs of reapers proceeding to their work with scythes in their hands.

In about half-an-hour I passed by a farm-house partly surrounded with walnut trees. Still the same high hedges on both sides of the road: are these hedges relics of the sacrificial groves of Mona? thought I to myself. Then I came to a wretched village through which I hurried at the rate of six miles an hour. I then saw a long, lofty, craggy hill on my right hand towards the east.

'What mountain is that?' said I to an urchin playing in the hot dust of the road.

'Mynydd Lydiart!' said the urchin, tossing up a handful of the hot dust into the air, part of which in descending fell into my eyes.

I shortly afterwards passed by a handsome lodge. I then saw groves, mountain Lydiart forming a noble background.

'Who owns this wood?' said I in Welsh to two men who were limbing a felled tree by the roadside.

'Lord Vivian,' answered one, touching his hat.

'The gentleman is our countryman,' said he to the other after I had passed.

I was now descending the side of a pretty valley, and soon found myself at Pentraeth Coch. The part of the Pentraeth where I now

was consisted of a few houses and a church, or something which I judged to be a church, for there was no steeple; the houses and church stood about a little open spot or square, the church on the east, and on the west a neat little inn or public-house over the door of which was written 'The White Horse. Hugh Pritchard.' By this time I had verified in part the prediction of the old Welsh poet of the post office. Though I was not yet arrived at Llanfair, I was, if not tired, very thirsty, owing to the burning heat of the weather, so I determined to go in and have some ale. On entering the house I was greeted in English by Mr. Hugh Pritchard himself, a tall bulky man with a weather-beaten countenance, dressed in a brown jerkin and corduroy trowsers, with a broad low-crowned buff-coloured hat on his head, and what might be called half shoes and half high-lows on his feet. He had a short pipe in his mouth, which when he greeted me he took out, but replaced as soon as the greeting was over, which consisted of 'Good day, sir,' delivered in a frank, hearty tone. I looked Mr. Hugh Pritchard in the face and thought I had never seen a more honest countenance. On my telling Mr. Pritchard that I wanted a pint of ale, a buxom damsel came forward and led me into a nice cool parlour on the right-hand side of the door, and then went to fetch the ale.

Mr. Pritchard meanwhile went into a kind of tap-room, fronting the parlour, where I heard him talking in Welsh about pigs and cattle to

some of his customers. I observed that he spoke with some hesitation; which circumstance I mention as rather curious, he being the only Welshman I have ever known who, when speaking his native language, appeared to be at a loss for words. The damsel presently brought me the ale, which I tasted and found excellent; she was going away when I asked her whether Mr. Pritchard was her father; on her replying in the affirmative I inquired whether she was born in that house.

'No!' said she; 'I was born in Liverpool; my father was born in this house, which belonged to his fathers before him, but he left it at an early age and married my mother in Liverpool, who was an Anglesey woman, and so I was born in Liverpool.'

'And what did you do in Liverpool?' said I.

'My mother kept a little shop,' said the girl, 'whilst my father followed various occupations.'

'And how long have you been here?' said I.

'Since the death of my grandfather,' said the girl, 'which happened about a year ago. When he died my father came here and took possession of his birthright.'

'You speak very good English,' said I; 'have you any Welsh?'

'O yes, plenty,' said the girl; 'we always speak Welsh together, but being born at Liverpool, I of course have plenty of English.'

'And which language do you prefer?' said I.

'I think I like English best,' said the girl, 'it is the most useful language.'

'Not in Anglesey,' said I.

'Well,' said the girl, 'it is the most genteel.'

'Gentility,' said I, 'will be the ruin of Welsh, as it has been of many other things—what have I to pay for the ale?'

'Three pence,' said she.

I paid the money and the girl went out. I finished my ale, and getting up made for the door; at the door I was met by Mr. Hugh Pritchard, who came out of the tap-room to thank me for my custom, and to bid me farewell. I asked him whether I should have any difficulty in finding the way to Llanfair.

'None whatever,' said he, 'you have only to pass over the bridge of the traeth, and to go due north for about four miles, and you will find yourself in Llanfair.'

'What kind of place is it?' said I.

'A poor straggling village,' said Mr. Pritchard.

'Shall I be able to obtain a lodging there for the night?' said I.

'Scarcely one such as you would like,' said Hugh.

'And where had I best pass the night?' I demanded.

'We can accommodate you comfortably here,' said Mr. Pritchard, 'provided you have no objection to come back.'

I told him that I should be only too happy, and forthwith departed, glad at heart that I had secured a comfortable lodging for the night.

CHAPTER XXXII

Leave Pentraeth—Tranquil Scene—The Knoll—The Miller and his Wife—Poetry of Gronwy—Kind Offer—Church of Llanfair—No English—Confusion of Ideas—Tŷ Gronwy—Notable Little Girl—The Sycamore Leaf—Home from California.

THE village of Pentraeth Coch occupies two sides of a romantic dell—that part of it which stands on the southern side, and which comprises the church and the little inn, is by far the prettiest, that which occupies the northern is a poor assemblage of huts, a brook rolls at the bottom of the dell over which there is a little bridge: coming to the bridge I stopped, and looked over the side into the water running briskly below. An aged man who looked like a beggar, but who did not beg of me, stood by.

'To what place does this water run?' said I in English.

'I know no Saxon,' said he in trembling accents.

I repeated my question in Welsh.

'To the sea,' he said, 'which is not far off, indeed it is so near, that when there are high tides the salt water comes up to this bridge.'

'You seem feeble?' said I.

'I am so,' said he, 'for I am old.'

'How old are you?' said I.

'Sixteen after sixty,' said the old man with

a sigh; 'and I have nearly lost my sight and my hearing.'

'Are you poor?' said I.

'Very,' said the old man.

I gave him a trifle which he accepted with thanks.

'Why is this sand called the Red Sand?' said I.

'I cannot tell you,' said the old man, 'I wish I could, for you have been kind to me.'

Bidding him farewell I passed through the northern part of the village to the top of the hill. I walked a little way forward and then stopped, as I had done at the bridge in the dale, and looked to the east, over a low stone wall.

Before me lay the sea or rather the northern entrance of the Menai Straits. To my right was mountain Lidiart projecting some way into the sea, to my left, that is to the north, was a high hill, with a few white houses near its base, forming a small village, which a woman who passed by knitting told me was called Llan Peder Goch or the Church of Red Saint Peter. Mountain Lidiart and the Northern Hill formed the headlands of a beautiful bay into which the waters of the traeth dell, from which I had come, were discharged. A sandbank, probably covered with the sea at high tide, seemed to stretch from mountain Lidiart a considerable way towards the northern hill. Mountain, bay and sandbank were bathed in sunshine; the water was perfectly calm; nothing was moving upon it, nor upon the shore, and I thought I had never beheld a more beautiful and tranquil scene.

I went on. The country which had hitherto been very beautiful, abounding with yellow cornfields, became sterile and rocky; there were stone walls, but no hedges. I passed by a moor on my left, then a moory hillock on my right; the way was broken and stony; all traces of the good roads of Wales had disappeared; the habitations which I saw by the way were miserable hovels into and out of which large sows were stalking, attended by their farrows.

'Am I far from Llanfair?' said I to a child.

'You are in Llanfair, gentleman,' said the child.

A desolate place was Llanfair. The sea in the neighbourhood to the south, limekilns with their stifling smoke not far from me. I sat down on a little green knoll on the right-hand side of the road; a small house was near me, and a desolate-looking mill at about a furlong's distance, to the south. Hogs came about me grunting and sniffing. I felt quite melancholy.

'Is this the neighbourhood of the birthplace of Gronwy Owen?' said I to myself. 'No wonder that he was unfortunate through life, springing from such a region of wretchedness.'

Wretched as the region seemed, however, I soon found there were kindly hearts close by me.

As I sat on the knoll I heard some one slightly cough very near me, and looking to the left saw a man dressed like a miller looking at me from the garden of the little house, which I have already mentioned.

I got up and gave him the sele of the day in

English. He was a man about thirty, rather tall than otherwise, with a very prepossessing countenance. He shook his head at my English.

'What,' said I, addressing him in the language of the country, 'have you no English? Perhaps you have Welsh?'

'Plenty,' said he, laughing, 'there is no lack of Welsh amongst any of us here. Are you a Welshman?'

'No,' said I, 'an Englishman from the far east of Lloegr.'

'And what brings you here?' said the man.

'A strange errand,' I replied, 'to look at the birthplace of a man who has long been dead.'

'Do you come to seek for an inheritance?' said the man.

'No,' said I. 'Besides, the man whose birthplace I came to see died poor, leaving nothing behind him but immortality.'

'Who was he?' said the miller.

'Did you ever hear a sound of Gronwy Owen?' said I.

'Frequently,' said the miller; 'I have frequently heard a sound of him. He was born close by in a house yonder,' pointing to the south.

'O yes, gentleman,' said a nice-looking woman, who holding a little child by the hand was come to the house-door, and was eagerly listening, 'we have frequently heard speak of Gronwy Owen; there is much talk of him in these parts.'

'I am glad to hear it,' said I, 'for I half feared that his name would not be known here.'

'Pray, gentleman, walk in!' said the miller; 'we are going to have our afternoon's meal, and shall be rejoiced if you will join us.'

'Yes do, gentleman,' said the miller's wife, for such the good woman was; 'and many a welcome shall you have.'

I hesitated, and was about to excuse myself.

'Don't refuse, gentleman!' said both, 'surely you are not too proud to sit down with us?'

'I am afraid I shall only cause you trouble,' said I.

'Dim blinder, no trouble,' exclaimed both at once; 'pray do walk in!'

I entered the house, and the kitchen, parlour, or whatever it was, a nice little room with a slate floor. They made me sit down at a table by the window, which was already laid for a meal. There was a clean cloth upon it, a tea-pot, cups and saucers, a large plate of bread-and-butter, and a plate on which were a few very thin slices of brown, watery cheese.

My good friends took their seats, the wife poured out tea for the stranger and her husband, helped us both to bread-and-butter and the watery cheese, then took care of herself. Before, however, I could taste the tea, the wife, seeming to recollect herself, started up and, hurrying to a cupboard, produced a basin full of snow-white lump sugar, and taking the spoon out of my hand, placed two of the largest lumps in my cup, though she helped neither her husband nor herself; the sugar-basin being probably only kept for grand occasions.

My eyes filled with tears; for in the whole course of my life I had never experienced so much genuine hospitality. Honour to the miller of Mona and his wife; and honour to the kind hospitable Celts in general! How different is the reception of this despised race of the wandering stranger from that of ——. However, I am a Saxon myself, and the Saxons have no doubt their virtues; a pity that they should be all uncouth and ungracious ones!

I asked my kind host his name.

'John Jones,' he replied, 'Melinydd of Llanfair.'

'Is the mill which you work your own property?' I inquired.

'No,' he answered, 'I rent it of a person who lives close by.'

'And how happens it,' said I, 'that you speak no English?'

'How should it happen,' said he, 'that I should speak any? I have never been far from here; my wife who has lived at service at Liverpool can speak some.'

'Can you read poetry?' said I.

'I can read the psalms and hymns that they sing at our chapel,' he replied.

'Then you are not of the Church?' said I.

'I am not,' said the miller; 'I am a Methodist.'

'Can you read the poetry of Gronwy Owen?' said I.

'I cannot,' said the miller, 'that is, with any comfort; his poetry is in the ancient Welsh

measures, which make poetry so difficult that few can understand it.'

'I can understand poetry in those measures,' said I.

'And how much time did you spend,' said the miller, 'before you could understand the poetry of the measures?'

'Three years,' said I.

The miller laughed.

'I could not have afforded all that time,' said he, 'to study the songs of Gronwy. However, it is well that some people should have time to study them. He was a great poet, as I have been told, and is the glory of our land—but he was unfortunate; I have read his life in Welsh and part of his letters; and in doing so have shed tears.'

'Has his house any particular name?' said I.

'It is called sometimes Tŷ Gronwy,' said the miller; 'but more frequently Tafarn Goch.'

'The Red Tavern?' said I. 'How is it that so many of your places are called Goch? there is Pentraeth Goch; there is Saint Pedair Goch, and here at Llanfair is Tafarn Goch.'

The miller laughed.

'It will take a wiser man than I,' said he, 'to answer that question.'

The repast over, I rose up, gave my hosts thanks, and said, 'I will now leave you, and hunt up things connected with Gronwy.'

'And where will you find a lletty for night, gentleman?' said the miller's wife. 'This is a poor place, but if you will make use of our home you are welcome.'

'I need not trouble you,' said I, 'I return this night to Pentraeth Goch where I shall sleep.'

'Well,' said the miller, 'whilst you are at Llanfair I will accompany you about. Where shall we go to first?'

'Where is the church?' said I. 'I should like to see the church where Gronwy worshipped God as a boy.'

'The church is at some distance,' said the man; 'it is past my mill, and as I want to go to the mill for a moment, it will be perhaps well to go and see the church, before we go to the house of Gronwy.'

I shook the miller's wife by the hand, patted a little yellow-haired girl of about two years old on the head, who during the whole time of the meal had sat on the slate floor looking up into my face, and left the house with honest Jones.

We directed our course to the mill, which lay some way down a declivity, towards the sea. Near the mill was a comfortable-looking house, which my friend told me belonged to the proprietor of the mill. A rustic-looking man stood in the mill-yard, who he said was the proprietor—the honest miller went into the mill, and the rustic-looking proprietor greeted me in Welsh, and asked me if I was come to buy hogs.

'No,' said I; 'I am come to see the birthplace of Gronwy Owen'; he stared at me for a moment, then seemed to muse, and at last walked away saying, 'Ah! a great man.'

The miller presently joined me, and we proceeded farther down the hill. Our way lay between stone walls, and sometimes over them. The land was moory and rocky, with nothing grand about it, and the miller described it well when he said it was tîr gwael—mean land. In about a quarter of an hour we came to the churchyard, into which we got, the gate being locked, by clambering over the wall.

The church stands low down the descent, not far distant from the sea. A little brook, called in the language of the country a frwd, washes its yard-wall on the south. It is a small edifice with no spire, but to the south-west there is a little stone erection rising from the roof, in which hangs a bell—there is a small porch looking to the south. With respect to its interior I can say nothing, the door being locked. It is probably like the outside, simple enough. It seemed to be about two hundred and fifty years old, and to be kept in tolerable repair. Simple as the edifice was, I looked with great emotion upon it; and could I do else, when I reflected that the greatest British poet of the last century had worshipped God within it, with his poor father and mother, when a boy?

I asked the miller whether he could point out to me any tombs or grave-stones of Gronwy's family, but he told me that he was not aware of any. On looking about I found the name of Owen in the inscription on the slate slab of a respectable-looking modern tomb, on the north-

east side of the church. The inscription was as follows :—

Er cof am JANE OWEN,
Gwraig Edward Owen,
Monachlog Llanfair Mathafarn eithaf,
A fu farw Chwefror 28 1842
Yn 51 Oed.

i.e. 'To the memory of Jane Owen wife of Edward Owen, of the monastery of St. Mary of farther Mathafarn, who died February 28, 1842, aged fifty-one.'

Whether the Edward Owen mentioned here was any relation to the great Gronwy, I had no opportunity of learning. I asked the miller what was meant by the monastery, and he told me that it was the name of a building to the north-east near the sea, which had once been a monastery, but had been converted into a farm-house, though it still retained its original name. 'May all monasteries be converted into farm-houses,' said I, 'and may they still retain their original names in mockery of popery!'

Having seen all I could well see of the church and its precincts I departed with my kind guide. After we had retraced our steps some way, we came to some stepping-stones on the side of a wall, and the miller pointing to them said :

'The nearest way to the house of Gronwy will be over the llamfa.'

I was now become ashamed of keeping the worthy fellow from his business, and begged him to return to his mill. He refused to leave me, at first, but on my pressing him to do so, and on my telling him that I could find the way to the

house of Gronwy very well by myself, he consented. We shook hands, the miller wished me luck, and betook himself to his mill, whilst I crossed the llamfa. I soon, however, repented having left the path by which I had come. I was presently in a maze of little fields with stone walls over which I had to clamber. At last I got into a lane with a stone wall on each side. A man came towards me and was about to pass me—his look was averted, and he was evidently one of those who have 'no English.' A Welshman of his description always averting his look when he sees a stranger who he thinks has 'no Welsh,' lest the stranger should ask him a question and he be obliged to confess that he has 'no English.'

'Is this the way to Llanfair?' said I to the man. The man made a kind of rush in order to get past me.

'Have you any Welsh?' I shouted as loud as I could bawl.

The man stopped, and turning a dark, sullen countenance half upon me said, 'Yes, I have Welsh.'

'Which is the way to Llanfair?' said I.

'Llanfair, Llanfair?' said the man, 'what do you mean?'

'I want to get there,' said I.

'Are you not there already?' said the fellow stamping on the ground, 'are you not in Llanfair?'

'Yes, but I want to get to the town.'

'Town, town! Oh, I have no English,' said

the man; and off he started like a frighted bullock. The poor fellow was probably at first terrified at seeing an Englishman, then confused at hearing an Englishman speak Welsh, a language which the Welsh in general imagine no Englishman can speak, the tongue of an Englishman as they say not being long enough to pronounce Welsh; and lastly utterly deprived of what reasoning faculties he had still remaining by my asking him for the town of Llanfair, there being properly no town.

I went on and at last getting out of the lane, found myself upon the road, along which I had come about two hours before; the house of the miller was at some distance on my right. Near me were two or three houses and part of the skeleton of one, on which some men, in the dress of masons, seemed to be occupied. Going up to these men I said in Welsh to one, whom I judged to be the principal, and who was rather a tall fine-looking fellow:

'Have you heard a sound of Gronwy Owain?'

Here occurred another instance of the strange things people do when their ideas are confused. The man stood for a moment or two, as if transfixed, a trowel motionless in one of his hands, and a brick in the other; at last giving a kind of gasp, he answered in very tolerable Spanish:

'Si, señor! he oido.'

'Is his house far from here?' said I in Welsh.

'No, señor!' said the man, 'no esta muy lejos.'

'I am a stranger here, friend, can anybody show me the way?'

'Si señor! este mozo luego acompañara usted.'

Then turning to a lad of about eighteen, also dressed as a mason, he said in Welsh:

'Show this gentleman instantly the way to Tafarn Goch.'

The lad flinging a hod down, which he had on his shoulder, instantly set off, making me a motion with his head to follow him. I did so, wondering what the man could mean by speaking to me in Spanish. The lad walked by my side in silence for about two furlongs till we came to a range of trees, seemingly sycamores, behind which was a little garden, in which stood a long low house with three chimneys. The lad stopping flung open a gate which led into the garden, then crying to a child which he saw within: 'Gad roi tro'—let the man take a turn; he was about to leave me, when I stopped him to put sixpence into his hand. He received the money with a gruff 'Diolch!' and instantly set off at a quick pace. Passing the child, who stared at me, I walked to the back part of the house, which seemed to be a long mud cottage. After examining the back part I went in front, where I saw an aged woman with several children, one of whom was the child I had first seen; she smiled and asked me what I wanted.

I said that I had come to see the house of Gronwy. She did not understand me, for shaking her head she said that she had no English, and was rather deaf. Raising my voice to a very high tone I said:

'Tŷ Gronwy!'

A gleam of intelligence flashed now in her eyes.

'Tŷ Gronwy,' she said, 'ah! I understand. Come in, sir.'

There were three doors to the house; she led me in by the midmost into a common cottage room, with no other ceiling, seemingly, than the roof. She bade me sit down by the window by a little table, and asked me whether I would have a cup of milk and some bread-and-butter; I declined both, but said I should be thankful for a little water.

This she presently brought me in a tea-cup; I drank it, the children amounting to five standing a little way from me staring at me. I asked her if this was the house in which Gronwy was born. She said it was, but that it had been altered very much since his time—that three families had lived in it, but that she believed he was born about where we were now.

A man now coming in who lived at the next door, she said I had better speak to him and tell him what I wanted to know, which he could then communicate to her, as she could understand his way of speaking much better than mine. Through the man I asked her whether there was any one of the blood of Gronwy Owen living in the house. She pointed to the children and said they had all some of his blood. I asked in what relationship they stood to Gronwy. She said she could hardly tell, that tri priodas, three marriages, stood between, and that the relationship was on the mother's side. I gathered from

her that the children had lost their mother, that their name was Jones, and that their father was her son. I asked if the house in which they lived was their own, she said no, that it belonged to a man who lived at some distance. I asked if the children were poor.

'Very,' said she.

I gave them each a trifle, and the poor old lady thanked me with tears in her eyes.

I asked whether the children could read, she said they all could, with the exception of the two youngest. The eldest she said could read anything, whether Welsh or English; she then took from the window-sill a book, which she put into my hand, saying the child could read it and understand it. I opened the book; it was an English school-book treating on all the sciences.

'Can you write?' said I to the child, a little stubby girl of about eight, with a broad flat red face and grey eyes, dressed in a chintz gown, a little bonnet on her head, and looking the image of notableness.

The little maiden, who had never taken her eyes off of me for a moment during the whole time I had been in the room, at first made no answer; being, however, bid by her grandmother to speak, she at length answered in a soft voice, 'Medraf, I can.'

'Then write your name in this book,' said I, taking out a pocket-book and a pencil, 'and write likewise that you are related to Gronwy Owen—and be sure you write in Welsh.'

The little maiden very demurely took the book and pencil, and placing the former on the table wrote as follows :

'Ellen Jones yn perthyn o bell i gronow owen.'

That is, 'Ellen Jones belonging from afar to Gronwy Owen.'

When I saw the name of Ellen I had no doubt that the children were related to the illustrious Gronwy. Ellen is a very uncommon Welsh name, but it seems to have been a family name of the Owens ; it was borne by an infant daughter of the poet whom he tenderly loved, and who died whilst he was toiling at Walton in Cheshire.

> 'Ellen, my darling,
> Who liest in the churchyard of Walton,'

says poor Gronwy in one of the most affecting elegies ever written.

After a little farther conversation I bade the family farewell and left the house. After going down the road a hundred yards I turned back in order to ask permission to gather a leaf from one of the sycamores. Seeing the man who had helped me in my conversation with the old woman standing at the gate, I told him what I wanted, whereupon he instantly tore down a handful of leaves and gave them to me—thrusting them into my coat-pocket I thanked him kindly and departed.

Coming to the half-erected house, I again saw the man to whom I had addressed myself for information. I stopped and, speaking Spanish

to him, asked how he had acquired the Spanish language.

'I have been in Chili, sir,' said he in the same tongue, 'and in California, and in those places I learned Spanish.'

'What did you go to Chili for?' said I; 'I need not ask you on what account you went to California.'

'I went there as a mariner,' said the man; 'I sailed out of Liverpool for Chili.'

'And how is it,' said I, 'that being a mariner and sailing in a Liverpool ship you do not speak English?'

'I speak English, señor,' said the man, 'perfectly well.'

'Then how in the name of wonder,' said I, speaking English, 'came you to answer me in Spanish? I am an Englishman thorough bred.'

'I can scarcely tell you how it was, sir,' said the man, scratching his head, 'but I thought I would speak to you in Spanish.'

'And why not English?' said I.

'Why, I heard you speaking Welsh,' said the man, 'and as for an Englishman speaking Welsh——'

'But why not answer me in Welsh?' said I.

'Why, I saw it was not your language, sir,' said the man, 'and as I had picked up some Spanish I thought it would be but fair to answer you in it.'

'But how did you know that I could speak Spanish?' said I.

'I don't know indeed, sir,' said the man; 'but I looked at you, and something seemed to tell

me that you could speak Spanish. I can't tell you how it was sir,' said he, looking me very innocently in the face, 'but I was forced to speak Spanish to you. I was indeed!'

'The long and the short of it was,' said I, 'that you took me for a foreigner, and thought that it would be but polite to answer me in a foreign language.'

'I daresay it was so, sir,' said the man. 'I daresay it was just as you say.'

'How did you fare in California?' said I.

'Very fairly indeed, sir,' said the man. 'I made some money there, and brought it home, and with part of it I am building this house.'

'I am very happy to hear it,' said I, 'you are really a remarkable man—few return from California speaking Spanish as you do, and still fewer with money in their pockets.'

The poor fellow looked pleased at what I said, more especially at that part of the sentence which touched upon his speaking Spanish well. Wishing him many years of health and happiness in the house he was building, I left him, and proceeded on my path towards Pentraeth Coch.

After walking some way, I turned round in order to take a last look of a place which had so much interest for me. The mill may be seen from a considerable distance; so may some of the scattered houses, and also the wood which surrounds the house of the illustrious Gronwy. Prosperity to Llanfair! and may many a pilgrimage be made to it of the same character as my own.

CHAPTER XXXIII

Boxing Harry—Mr. Bos—Black Robin—Drovers—Commercial Travellers.

I ARRIVED at the hostelry of Mr. Pritchard without meeting any adventure worthy of being marked down. I went into the little parlour, and, ringing the bell, was presently waited upon by Mrs. Pritchard, a nice matronly woman, whom I had not before seen, of whom I inquired what I could have for dinner.

'This is no great place for meat,' said Mrs. Pritchard, 'that is, fresh meat, for sometimes a fortnight passes without anything being killed in the neighbourhood. I am afraid at present there is not a bit of fresh meat to be had. What we can get you for dinner I do not know, unless you are willing to make shift with bacon and eggs.'

'I 'll tell you what I 'll do,' said I, 'I will have the bacon and eggs with tea and bread-and-butter, not forgetting a pint of ale—in a word, I will box Harry.'

'I suppose you are a commercial gent,' said Mrs. Pritchard.

'Why do you suppose me a commercial gent?' said I. 'Do I look one?'

'Can't say you do much,' said Mrs. Pritchard; 'you have no rings on your fingers, nor a gilt chain at your waistcoat-pocket, but when you

said "box Harry," I naturally took you to be one of the commercial gents, for when I was at Liverpool I was told that that was a word of theirs.'

'I believe the word properly belongs to them,' said I. 'I am not one of them; but I learnt it from them, a great many years ago, when I was much amongst them. Those whose employers were in a small way of business, or allowed them insufficient salaries, frequently used to "box Harry," that is, have a beef-steak, or mutton-chop, or perhaps bacon and eggs, as I am going to have, along with tea and ale, instead of the regular dinner of a commercial gentleman, namely, fish, hot joint and fowl, pint of sherry, tart, ale and cheese, and bottle of old port, at the end of all.'

Having made arrangements for 'boxing Harry,' I went into the tap-room, from which I had heard the voice of Mr. Pritchard proceeding during the whole of my conversation with his wife. Here I found the worthy landlord seated with a single customer; both were smoking. The customer instantly arrested my attention. He was a man seemingly about forty years of age with a broad red face, with certain somethings, looking very much like incipient carbuncles, here and there upon it. His eyes were grey and looked rather as if they squinted; his mouth was very wide, and when it opened displayed a set of strong white, uneven teeth. He was dressed in a pepper-and-salt coat of the Newmarket cut, breeches of corduroy and brown

top boots, and had on his head a broad, black, coarse, low-crowned hat. In his left hand he held a heavy whale-bone whip with a brass head. I sat down on a bench nearly opposite to him and the landlord.

'Well,' said Mr. Pritchard, 'did you find your way to Llanfair?'

'Yes,' said I.

'And did you execute the business satisfactorily which led you there?' said Mr. Pritchard.

'Perfectly,' said I.

'Well, what did you give a stone for your live pork?' said his companion, glancing up at me and speaking in a gruff voice.

'I did not buy any live pork,' said I; 'do you take me for a pig-jobber?'

'Of course,' said the man in pepper-and-salt; 'who but a pig-jobber could have business at Llanfair?'

'Does Llanfair produce nothing but pigs?' said I.

'Nothing at all,' said the man in the pepper-and-salt, 'that is, nothing worth mentioning. You wouldn't go there for runts; that is, if you were in your right senses; if you were in want of runts you would have gone to my parish and have applied to me, Mr. Bos; that is, if you were in your senses. Wouldn't he, John Pritchard?'

Mr. Pritchard thus appealed to took the pipe out of his mouth, and with some hesitation said that he believed the gentleman neither went to Llanfair for pigs nor black cattle, but upon some particular business.

'Well,' said Mr. Bos, 'it may be so, but I can't conceive how any person, either gentle or simple, could have any business in Anglesey, save that business was pigs or cattle.'

'The truth is,' said I, 'I went to Llanfair to see the birthplace of a great man—the cleverest Anglesey ever produced.'

'Then you went wrong,' said Mr. Bos, 'you went to the wrong parish, you should have gone to Penmynnydd; the clebber man of Anglesey was born and buried at Penmynnydd, you may see his tomb in the church.'

'You are alluding to Black Robin,' said I, 'who wrote the ode in praise of Anglesey—yes, he was a very clever young fellow, but excuse me, he was not half such a poet as Gronwy Owen.'

'Black Robin,' said Mr. Bos, 'and Gronow Owen, who the devil were they? I never heard of either. I wasn't talking of them, but of the clebberest man the world ever saw. Did you never hear of Owen Tiddir? If you didn't, where did you get your education?'

'I have heard of Owen Tudor,' said I, 'but never understood that he was particularly clever; handsome he undoubtedly was—but clever——'

'How not clebber?' interrupted Mr. Bos. 'If he wasn't clebber, who was clebber? Didn't he marry a great queen, and was not Harry the Eighth his great grandson?'

'Really,' said I, 'you know a great deal of history.'

'I should hope I do,' said Mr. Bos. 'O, I

wasn't at school at Blewmaris for six months for nothing; and I haven't been in Northampton, and in every town in England, without learning something of history. With regard to history I may say that few—— Won't you drink?' said he patronizingly, as he pushed a jug of ale which stood before him on a little table towards me.

Begging politely to be excused on the plea that I was just about to take tea, I asked him in what capacity he had travelled all over England.

'As a drover to be sure,' said Mr. Bos, 'and I may say that there are not many in Anglesey better known in England than myself—at any rate I may say that there is not a public-house between here and Worcester at which I am not known.'

'Pray excuse me,' said I, 'but is not droving rather a low-lifed occupation?'

'Not half so much as pig-jobbing,' said Bos, 'and that that's your trade I am certain, or you would never have gone to Llanfair.'

'I am no pig-jobber,' said I, 'and when I asked you that question about droving, I merely did so because one Ellis Wynn, in a book he wrote, gives the drovers a very bad character, and puts them in Hell for their malpractices.'

'O, he does,' said Mr. Bos, 'well, the next time I meet him at Corwen I'll crack his head for saying so. Malpractices—he had better look at his own, for he is a pig-jobber too. Written a book has he? then I suppose he has been left a legacy, and gone to school after middle-age, for when I last saw him, which is

four years ago, he could neither read nor write.'

I was about to tell Mr. Bos that the Ellis Wynn that I meant was no more a pig-jobber than myself, but a respectable clergyman, who had been dead considerably upwards of a hundred years, and that also, notwithstanding my respect for Mr. Bos's knowledge of history, I did not believe that Owen Tudor was buried at Penmynnydd, when I was prevented by the entrance of Mrs. Pritchard, who came to inform me that my repast was ready in the other room, whereupon I got up and went into the parlour to 'box Harry.'

Having despatched my bacon and eggs, tea and ale, I fell into deep meditation. My mind reverted to a long past period of my life, when I was to a certain extent mixed up with commercial travellers, and had plenty of opportunities of observing their habits, and the terms employed by them in conversation. I called up several individuals of the two classes into which they used to be divided, for commercial travellers in my time were divided into two classes, those who ate dinners and drank their bottle of port, and those who 'boxed Harry.' What glorious fellows the first seemed! What airs they gave themselves! What oaths they swore! and what influence they had with hostlers and chambermaids! and what a sneaking-looking set the others were! shabby in their apparel; no fine ferocity in their countenances; no oaths in their mouths, except such a trumpery apology for an

oath as an occasional 'confounded hard'; with little or no influence at inns, scowled at by hostlers, and never smiled at by chamber-maids —and then I remembered how often I had bothered my head in vain to account for the origin of the term 'box Harry,' and how often I had in vain applied both to those who did box and to those who did not 'box Harry,' for a clear and satisfactory elucidation of the expression—and at last found myself again bothering my head as of old in a vain attempt to account for the origin of the term 'boxing Harry.'

CHAPTER XXXIV

Northampton—Horse-breaking—Snoring.

TIRED at length with my vain efforts to account for the term which in my time was so much in vogue amongst commercial gentlemen, I left the little parlour and repaired to the common room. Mr. Pritchard and Mr. Bos were still there smoking and drinking, but there was now a candle on the table before them, for night was fast coming on. Mr. Bos was giving an account of his travels in England, sometimes in Welsh, sometimes in English, to which Mr. Pritchard was listening with the greatest attention, occasionally putting in a 'see there now,' and 'what a fine thing it is to have gone about.' After some time Mr. Bos exclaimed:

'I think, upon the whole, of all the places I have seen in England I like Northampton best.'

'I suppose,' said I, 'you found the men of Northampton good-tempered, jovial fellows?'

'Can't say I did,' said Mr. Bos; 'they are all shoemakers, and of course quarrelsome and contradictory, for where was there ever a shoemaker who was not conceited and easily riled? No, I have little to say in favour of Northampton as far as the men are concerned. It 's not the men but the women that make me speak in praise of Northampton. The men are all ill-

tempered, but the women quite the contrary. I never saw such a place for merched anladd as Northampton. I was a great favourite with them, and could tell you such tales.'

And then Mr. Bos, putting his hat rather on one side of his head, told us two or three tales of his adventures with the merched anladd of Northampton, which brought powerfully to my mind part of what Ellis Wynn had said with respect to the practices of drovers in his day, detestation for which had induced him to put the whole tribe into Hell.

All of a sudden I heard a galloping down the road, and presently a mighty plunging, seemingly of a horse, before the door of the inn. I rushed out followed by my companions, and lo, on the open space before the inn was a fine young horse, rearing and kicking, with a young man on his back. The horse had neither bridle nor saddle, and the young fellow merely rode him with a rope, passed about his head—presently the horse became tolerably quiet, and his rider jumping off led him into the stable, where he made him fast to the rack and then came and joined us, whereupon we all went into the room from which I and the others had come on hearing the noise of the struggle.

'How came you on the colt's back, Jenkins?' said Mr. Pritchard, after we had all sat down and Jenkins had called for some cwrw. 'I did not know that he was broke in.'

'I am breaking him in myself,' said Jenkins, speaking Welsh. 'I began with him to-night.'

'Do you mean to say,' said I, 'that you have begun breaking him in by mounting his back?'

'I do,' said the other.

'Then depend upon it,' said I, 'that it will not be long before he will either break his neck or knees, or he will break your neck or crown. You are not going the right way to work.'

'O, myn Diawl!' said Jenkins, 'I know better. In a day or two I shall have made him quite tame, and have got him into excellent paces, and shall have saved the money I must have paid away, had I put him into a jockey's hands.'

Time passed, night came on, and other guests came in. There was much talking of first-rate Welsh and very indifferent English, Mr. Bos being the principal speaker in both languages; his discourse was chiefly on the comparative merits of Anglesey runts and Scotch bullocks, and those of the merched anladd of Northampton and the lasses of Wrexham. He preferred his own country runts to the Scotch kine, but said upon the whole, though a Welshman, he must give the preference to the merched of Northampton over those of Wrexham, for free-and-easy demeanour, notwithstanding that in that point, which he said was the most desirable point in females, the lasses of Wrexham were generally considered out-and-outers.

Fond as I am of listening to public-house conversation, from which I generally contrive to extract both amusement and edification, I became rather tired of this, and getting up,

strolled about the little village by moonlight till I felt disposed to retire to rest, when returning to the inn, I begged to be shown the room in which I was to sleep. Mrs. Pritchard forthwith taking a candle conducted me to a small room upstairs. There were two beds in it. The good lady pointing to one, next the window, in which there were nice clean sheets, told me that was the one which I was to occupy, and bidding me good night, and leaving the candle, departed. Putting out the light I got into bed, but instantly found that the bed was not long enough by at least a foot. 'I shall pass an uncomfortable night,' said I, 'for I never yet could sleep comfortably in a bed too short. However, as I am on my travels, I must endeavour to accommodate myself to circumstances.' So I endeavoured to compose myself to sleep: before, however, I could succeed, I heard the sound of stumping steps coming upstairs, and perceived a beam of light through the crevices of the door, and in a moment more the door opened and in came two loutish farming lads whom I had observed below, one of them bearing a rushlight stuck into an old blacking-bottle. Without saying a word they flung off part of their clothes, and one of them having blown out the rushlight, they both tumbled into bed, and in a moment were snoring most sonorously. 'I am in a short bed,' said I, 'and have snorers close by me; I fear I shall have a sorry night of it.' I determined, however, to adhere to my resolution of making the best of circumstances, and lay perfectly quiet, listening

to the snorings as they rose and fell; at last they became more gentle and I fell asleep, notwithstanding my feet were projecting some way from the bed. I might have lain ten minutes or a quarter of an hour when I suddenly started up in the bed broad awake. There was a great noise below the window of plunging and struggling interspersed with Welsh oaths. Then there was a sound as if of a heavy fall, and presently a groan. 'I shouldn't wonder,' said I, 'if that fellow with the horse has verified my words, and has either broken his horse's neck or his own. However, if he has, he has no one to blame but himself. I gave him fair warning, and shall give myself no farther trouble about the matter, but go to sleep,' and so I did.

CHAPTER XXXV

Brilliant Morning—Travelling with Edification—A Good Clergyman—Cybi.

I AWOKE about six o'clock in the morning, having passed the night much better than I anticipated. The sun was shining bright and gloriously into the apartment. On looking into the other bed I found that my chums, the young farm-labourers, had deserted it. They were probably already in the field busy at labour. After lying a little time longer I arose, dressed myself and went down. I found my friend honest Pritchard smoking his morning pipe at the front door, and after giving him the sele of the day, I inquired of him the cause of the disturbance beneath my window the night before, and learned that the man of the horse had been thrown by the animal off its back, that the horse almost immediately after had slipped down, and that both had been led home very much hurt. We then talked about farming and the crops, and at length got into a discourse about Liverpool. I asked him how he liked that mighty seaport; he said very well, but that he did not know much about it—for though he had had a house there where his family had resided, he had not lived much at Liverpool himself, his absences from that place having been many and long.

'Have you travelled then much about England?' said I.

'No,' he replied. 'When I have travelled it has chiefly been across the sea to foreign places.'

'But what foreign places have you visited?' said I.

'I have visited,' said Pritchard, 'Constantinople, Alexandria, and some other cities in the south latitudes.'

'Dear me,' said I, 'you have seen some of the most celebrated places in the world—and yet you were silent, and said nothing about your travels whilst that fellow Bos was pluming himself at having been at such places as Northampton and Worcester, the haunts of shoemakers and pig-jobbers.'

'Ah,' said Pritchard, 'but Mr. Bos has travelled with edification; it is a fine thing to have travelled when one has done so with edification, but I have not. There is a vast deal of difference between me and him—he is considered the 'cutest man in these parts, and is much looked up to.'

'You are really,' said I, 'the most modest person I have ever known and the least addicted to envy. Let me see whether you have travelled without edification.'

I then questioned him about the places which he had mentioned, and found he knew a great deal about them, amongst other things he described Cleopatra's Needle, and the At Maidan at Constantinople, with surprising exactness.

'You put me out,' said I; 'you consider

yourself inferior to that droving fellow Bos, and to have travelled without edification, whereas you know a thousand times more than he, and indeed much more than many a person who makes his five hundred a year by going about lecturing on foreign places, but as I am no flatterer I will tell you that you have a fault which will always prevent your rising in this world, you have modesty; those who have modesty shall have no advancement, whilst those who can blow their own horn lustily shall be made governors. But allow me to ask you in what capacity you went abroad?'

'As engineer to various steamships,' said Pritchard.

'A director of the power of steam,' said I, 'and an explorer of the wonders of Iscander's city willing to hold the candle to Mr. Bos. I will tell you what, you are too good for this world, let us hope you will have your reward in the next.'

I breakfasted and asked for my bill; the bill amounted to little or nothing—half-a-crown, I think, for tea-dinner, sundry jugs of ale, bed and breakfast. I defrayed it, and then inquired whether it would be possible for me to see the inside of the church.

'O yes,' said Pritchard. 'I can let you in, for I am churchwarden and have the key.'

The church was a little edifice of some antiquity, with a little wing and without a spire; it was situated amidst a grove of trees. As we stood with our hats off in the sacred

edifice, I asked Pritchard if there were many Methodists in those parts.

'Not so many as there were,' said Pritchard, 'they are rapidly decreasing, and indeed dissenters in general. The cause of their decrease is that a good clergyman has lately come here, who visits the sick and preaches Christ, and in fact does his duty. If all our clergymen were like him there would not be many dissenters in Ynys Fon.'

Outside the church, in the wall, I observed a tablet with the following inscription in English.

Here lieth interred the body of Ann, wife of Robert Paston, who deceased the sixth day of October, Anno Domini.

1671.

R. P. A.

'You seem struck with that writing?' said Pritchard, observing that I stood motionless, staring at the tablet.

'The name of Paston,' said I, 'struck me; it is the name of a village in my own native district, from which an old family, now almost extinct, derived its name. How came a Paston into Ynys Fon? Are there any people bearing that name at present in these parts?'

'Not that I am aware,' said Pritchard.

'I wonder who his wife Ann was?' said I, 'from the style of that tablet she must have been a considerable person.'

'Perhaps she was a daughter of the Lewis family of Llan Dyfnant,' said Pritchard; 'that 's an old family and a rich one. Perhaps he came from a distance and saw and married a daughter of the Lewis of Dyfnant—more than one stranger has done so. Lord Vivian came from a distance and saw and married a daughter of the rich Lewis of Dyfnant.'

I shook honest Pritchard by the hand, thanked him for his kindness and wished him farewell, whereupon he gave mine a hearty squeeze, thanking me for my custom.

'Which is my way,' said I, 'to Pen Caer Gybi?'

'You must go about a mile on the Bangor road, and then turning to the right pass through Penmynnydd, but what takes you to Holyhead?'

'I wish to see,' said I, 'the place where Cybi the tawny saint preached and worshipped. He was called tawny because from his frequent walks in the blaze of the sun his face had become much sun-burnt. This is a furiously hot day, and perhaps by the time I get to Holyhead, I may be so sun-burnt as to be able to pass for Cybi himself.'

CHAPTER XXXVI

Moelfre—Owain Gwynedd—Church of Penmynnydd—The Rose of Mona.

Leaving Pentraeth Coch I retraced my way along the Bangor road till I came to the turning on the right. Here I diverged from the aforesaid road, and proceeded along one which led nearly due west; after travelling about a mile, I stopped on the top of a little hill; corn-fields were on either side, and in one an aged man was reaping close to the road; I looked south, west, north and east; to the south was the Snowdon range far away, with the Wyddfa just discernible; to the west and north was nothing very remarkable, but to the east or rather north-east, was mountain Lidiart and the tall hill confronting it across the bay.

'Can you tell me,' said I to the old reaper, 'the name of that bald hill, which looks towards Lidiart?'

'We call that hill Moelfre,' said the old man desisting from his labour, and touching his hat.

'Dear me,' said I; 'Moelfre, Moelfre!'

'Is there anything wonderful in the name, sir?' said the old man smiling.

'There is nothing wonderful in the name,' said I, 'which merely means the bald hill, but it brings wonderful recollections to my mind. I

little thought when I was looking from the road near Pentraeth Coch yesterday, on that hill and the bay and strand below it, and admiring the tranquillity which reigned over all, that I was gazing upon the scene of one of the most tremendous conflicts recorded in history or poetry.'

'Dear me,' said the old reaper; 'and whom may it have been between? the French and English, I suppose.'

'No,' said I; 'it was fought between one of your Welsh kings, the great Owain Gwynedd, and certain northern and Irish enemies of his.'

'Only think,' said the old man, 'and it was a fierce battle, sir?'

'It was indeed,' said I; 'according to the words of a poet, who described it, the Menai could not ebb on account of the torrent of blood which flowed into it, slaughter was heaped upon slaughter, shout followed shout, and around Moelfre a thousand war flags waved.'

'Well, sir,' said the old man, 'I never before heard anything about it, indeed I don't trouble my head with histories, unless they be Bible histories.'

'Are you a Churchman?' said I.

'No,' said the old man shortly; 'I am a Methodist.'

'I belong to the Church,' said I.

'So I should have guessed, sir, by your being so well acquainted with pennillion and histories. Ah, the Church. . . .'

'This is dreadfully hot weather, said I, 'and I

should like to offer you sixpence for ale, but as I am a Churchman I suppose you would not accept it from my hands.'

'The Lord forbid, sir,' said the old man, 'that I should be so uncharitable! If your honour chooses to give me sixpence, I will receive it willingly. Thank your honour! Well, I have often said there is a great deal of good in the Church of England.'

I once more looked at the hill which overlooked the scene of Owen Gwynedd's triumph over the united forces of the Irish Lochlanders and Normans, and then after inquiring of the old man whether I was in the right direction for Penmynnydd, and finding that I was, I set off at a great pace, singing occasionally snatches of Black Robin's ode in praise of Anglesey, amongst others the following stanza:—

> 'Bread of the wholesomest is found
> In my mother-land of Anglesey;
> Friendly bounteous men abound
> In Penmynnydd of Anglesey.'

I reached Penmynnydd, a small village consisting of a few white houses and a mill. The meaning of Penmynnydd is literally the top of a hill. The village does not stand on a hill, but the church, which is at some distance, stands on one, or rather on a hillock. And it is probable from the circumstance of the church standing on a hillock, that the parish derives its name. Towards the church after a slight glance at the village, I proceeded with hasty steps, and was soon at the foot of the hillock. A house, that of

the clergyman, stands near the church, on the top of the hill. I opened a gate, and entered a lane which seemed to lead up to the church.

As I was passing some low buildings, probably offices pertaining to the house, a head was thrust from a doorway, which stared at me. It was a strange hirsute head, and probably looked more strange and hirsute than it naturally was, owing to its having a hairy cap upon it.

'Good day,' said I.

'Good days, sar,' said the head, and in a moment more, a man of middle stature, about fifty, in hairy cap, shirt-sleeves, and green apron round his waist, stood before me. He looked the beau-ideal of a servant of all work.

'Can I see the church?' said I.

'Ah, you want to see the church,' said honest Scrub. 'Yes, sar! you shall see the church. You go up road there past church—come to house, knock at door—say what you want—and nice little girl show you church. Ah, you quite right to come and see church—fine tomb there and clebber man sleeping in it with his wife, clebber man that—Owen Tiddir; married great queen—dyn clebber iawn.'

Following the suggestions of the man of the hairy cap I went round the church and knocked at the door of the house, a handsome parsonage. A nice little servant-girl presently made her appearance at the door, of whom I inquired whether I could see the church.

'Certainly, sir,' said she; 'I will go for the key and accompany you.'

She fetched the key and away we went to the church. It is a venerable chapel-like edifice, with a belfry towards the west; the roof sinking by two gradations, is lower at the eastern or altar end than at the other. The girl, unlocking the door, ushered me into the interior.

'Which is the tomb of Tudor?' said I to the pretty damsel.

'There it is, sir,' said she, pointing to the north side of the church; 'there is the tomb of Owen Tudor.'

Beneath a low-roofed arch lay sculptured in stone, on an altar tomb, the figures of a man and woman; that of the man in armour; that of the woman in graceful drapery. The male figure lay next the wall.

'And you think,' said I to the girl, 'that yonder figure is that of Owen Tudor?'

'Yes, sir,' said the girl; 'yon figure is that of Owen Tudor; the other is that of his wife, the great queen; both their bodies rest below.'

I forbore to say that the figures were not those of Owen Tudor and the great queen, his wife; and I forbore to say that their bodies did not rest in that church, nor anywhere in the neighbourhood, for I was unwilling to dispel a pleasing delusion. The tomb is doubtless a tomb of one of the Tudor race, and of a gentle partner of his, but not of the Rose of Mona and Catharine of France. Her bones rest in some corner of Westminster's noble abbey; his moulder amongst those of thousands of others, Yorkists and Lancastrians, under the surface of the plain,

where Mortimer's Cross once stood, that plain on the eastern side of which meanders the murmuring Lug; that noble plain, where one of the hardest battles which ever blooded English soil was fought; where beautiful young Edward gained a crown, and old Owen lost a head, which when young had been the most beautiful of heads, which had gained for him the appellation of the Rose of Anglesey, and which had captivated the glances of the fair daughter of France, the widow of Monmouth's Harry, the immortal victor of Agincourt.

Nevertheless, long did I stare at that tomb which, though not that of the Rose of Mona and his queen, is certainly the tomb of some mighty one of the mighty race of Theodore—then saying something in Welsh to the pretty damsel, at which she started, and putting something into her hand, at which she curtseyed, I hurried out of the church.

CHAPTER XXXVII

Mental Excitation—Land of Poets—The Man in Grey—Drinking Healths—The Greatest Prydydd—Envy—Welshmen not Hogs—Gentlemanly Feeling—What Pursuit ?—Tell him to Walk Up—Editor of the 'Times'—Careful Wife—Departure.

I REGAINED the high road by a short cut, which I discovered, across a field. I proceeded rapidly along for some time. My mind was very much excited: I was in the birthplace of the mighty Tudors—I had just seen the tomb of one of them; I was also in the land of the bard; a country which had produced Gwalchmai, who sang the triumphs of Owain, and him who had sung the Cowydd of Judgment, Gronwy Owen. So no wonder I was excited. On I went reciting bardic snatches connected with Anglesey. At length I began repeating Black Robin's ode in praise of the island, or rather my own translation of it, executed more than thirty years before, which, amongst others, contains the following lines:—

> 'Twelve sober men the muses woo,
> Twelve sober men in Anglesey,
> Dwelling at home, like patriots true,
> In reverence for Anglesey.'

'O,' said I, after I had recited that stanza, 'what would I not give to see one of those sober patriotic bards, or at least one of their legitimate

successors, for by this time no doubt, the sober poets, mentioned by Black Robin, are dead. That they left legitimate successors, who can doubt? for Anglesey is never to be without bards. Have we not the words, not of Robin the Black, but Huw the Red to that effect?

> "Brodir, gnawd ynddi prydydd;
> Heb ganu ni bu ni bydd."

That is: a hospitable country, in which a poet is a thing of course. It has never been and will never be without song.'

Here I became silent, and presently arrived at the side of a little dell or ravine, down which the road led, from east to west. The northern and southern sides of this dell were precipitous. Beneath the southern one stood a small cottage. Just as I began to descend the eastern side, two men began to descend the opposite one, and it so happened that we met at the bottom of the dingle, just before the house, which bore a sign, and over the door of which was an inscription to the effect that ale was sold within. They saluted me; I returned their salutation, and then we all three stood still looking at one another. One of the men was rather a tall figure, about forty, dressed in grey, or pepper-and-salt, with a cap of some kind on his head, his face was long and rather good-looking, though slightly pock-broken. There was a peculiar gravity upon it. The other person was somewhat about sixty —he was much shorter than his companion, and much worse dressed—he wore a hat that had

several holes in it, a dusty, rusty, black coat, much too large for him; ragged yellow velveteen breeches, indifferent fustian gaiters, and shoes, cobbled here and there, one of which had rather an ugly bulge by the side near the toes. His mouth was exceedingly wide, and his nose remarkably long; its extremity of a deep purple; upon his features was a half-simple smile or leer; in his hand was a long stick. After we had all taken a full view of one another I said in Welsh, addressing myself to the man in grey, 'Pray may I take the liberty of asking the name of this place.'

'I believe you are an Englishman, sir,' said the man in grey, speaking English, 'I will therefore take the liberty of answering your question in the English tongue. The name of this place is Dyffryn Gaint.'

'Thank you,' said I; 'you are quite right with regard to my being an Englishman, perhaps you are one yourself?'

'Sir,' said the man in grey, 'I have not the honour to be so. I am a native of the small island in which we are.'

'Small,' said I, 'but famous, particularly for producing illustrious men.'

'That 's very true indeed, sir,' said the man in grey, drawing himself up; 'it is particularly famous for producing illustrious men.'

'There was Owen Tudor?' said I.

'Very true,' said the man in grey, 'his tomb is in the church a little way from hence.'

'Then,' said I, 'there was Gronwy Owen, one

of the greatest bards that ever lived. Out of reverence to his genius I went yesterday to see the place of his birth.'

'Sir,' said the man in grey, 'I should be sorry to leave you without enjoying your conversation at some length. In yonder house they sell good ale, perhaps you will not be offended if I ask you to drink some with me and my friend?'

'You are very kind,' said I, 'I am fond of good ale and fonder still of good company—suppose we go in?'

We went into the cottage, which was kept by a man and his wife, both of whom seemed to be perfectly well acquainted with my two new friends. We sat down on stools, by a clean white table in a little apartment with a clay floor—notwithstanding the heat of the weather, the little room was very cool and pleasant owing to the cottage being much protected from the sun by its situation. The man in grey called for a jug of ale, which was presently placed before us along with three glasses. The man in grey having filled the glasses from the jug which might contain three pints, handed one to me, another to his companion, and then taking the third drank to my health. I drank to his and that of his companion; the latter, after nodding to us both, emptied his at a draught, and then with a kind of half-fatuous leer, exclaimed, 'Da iawn, very good.'

The ale, though not very good, was cool and neither sour nor bitter; we then sat for a moment or two in silence, my companions on one side

of the table, and I on the other. After a little time the man in grey looking at me said :

'Travelling, I suppose, in Anglesey for pleasure ?'

'To a certain extent,' said I ; 'but my chief object in visiting Anglesey was to view the birthplace of Gronwy Owen ; I saw it yesterday, and am now going to Holyhead chiefly with a view to see the country.'

'And how came you, an Englishman, to know anything of Gronwy Owen ?'

'I studied Welsh literature when young,' said I, 'and was much struck with the verses of Gronwy : he was one of the great bards of Wales, and certainly the most illustrious genius that Anglesey ever produced.'

'A great genius, I admit,' said the man in grey, 'but pardon me, not exactly the greatest Ynis Fon has produced. The race of the bards is not quite extinct in the island, sir. I could name one or two—however, I leave others to do so—but I assure you the race of bards is not quite extinct here.'

'I am delighted to hear you say so,' said I, 'and make no doubt that you speak correctly, for the Red Bard has said that Mona is never to be without a poet—but where am I to find one ? Just before I saw you I was wishing to see a poet ; I would willingly give a quart of ale to see a genuine Anglesey poet.'

'You would, sir, would you ?' said the man in grey, lifting his head on high, and curling his upper lip.

'I would, indeed,' said I, 'my greatest desire at present is to see an Anglesey poet, but where am I to find one?'

'Where is he to find one?' said he of the tattered hat; 'where 's the gwr boneddig to find a prydydd? No occasion to go far, he, he, he.'

'Well,' said I, 'but where is he?'

'Where is he? why, there,' said he, pointing to the man in grey—'the greatest prydydd in tîr Fon or the whole world.'

'Tut, tut, hold your tongue,' said the man in grey.

'Hold my tongue, myn Diawl, not I—I speak the truth,' then filling his glass he emptied it exclaiming, 'I 'll not hold my tongue. The greatest prydydd in the whole world.'

'Then I have the honour to be seated with a bard of Anglesey?' said I, addressing the man in grey.

'Tut, tut,' said he of the grey suit.

'The greatest prydydd in the whole world,' iterated he of the bulged shoe, with a slight hiccup, as he again filled his glass.

'Then,' said I, 'I am truly fortunate.'

'Sir,' said the man in grey, 'I had no intention of discovering myself, but as my friend here has betrayed my secret, I confess that I am a bard of Anglesey—my friend is an excellent individual, but indiscreet, highly indiscreet, as I have frequently told him,' and here he looked most benignantly reproachful at him of the tattered hat.

'The greatest prydydd,' said the latter, 'the greatest prydydd that——' and leaving his sentence incomplete he drank off the ale which he had poured into his glass.

'Well,' said I, 'I cannot sufficiently congratulate myself for having met an Anglesey bard—no doubt a graduate one. Anglesey was always famous for graduate bards, for what says Black Robin?

> "Though Arvon graduate bards can boast,
> Yet more canst thou, O Anglesey."'

'I suppose by graduate bard you mean one who has gained the chair at an eisteddfod?' said the man in grey. 'No, I have never gained the silver chair—I have never had an opportunity. I have been kept out of the eisteddfodau. There is such a thing as envy, sir—but there is one comfort, that envy will not always prevail.'

'No,' said I; 'envy will not always prevail—envious scoundrels may chuckle for a time at the seemingly complete success of the dastardly arts to which they have recourse, in order to crush merit—but Providence is not asleep. All of a sudden they see their supposed victim on a pinnacle far above their reach. Then there is weeping, and gnashing of teeth with a vengeance, and the long melancholy howl. O, there is nothing in this world which gives one so perfect an idea of retribution as the long melancholy howl of the disappointed envious scoundrel when he sees his supposed victim smiling on an altitude far above his reach.'

'Sir,' said the man in grey, 'I am delighted to hear you. Give me your hand, your honourable hand. Sir, you have now felt the hand-grasp of a Welshman, to say nothing of an Anglesey bard, and I have felt that of a Briton, perhaps a bard, a brother, sir? O, when I first saw your face out there in the dyffryn, I at once recognised in it that of a kindred spirit, and I felt compelled to ask you to drink. Drink, sir! but how is this? the jug is empty—how is this?—O, I see—my friend, sir, though an excellent individual, is indiscreet, sir—very indiscreet. Landlord, bring this moment another jug of ale!'

'The greatest prydydd,' stuttered he of the bulged shoe—'the greatest prydydd—O——'

'Tut, tut,' said the man in grey.

'I speak the truth and care for no one,' said he of the tattered hat. 'I say the greatest prydydd. If any one wishes to gainsay me let him show his face and Myn Diawl——'

The landlord brought the ale, placed it on the table, and then stood as if waiting for something.

'I suppose you are waiting to be paid,' said I; 'what is your demand?'

'Sixpence for this jug, and sixpence for the other,' said the landlord.

I took out a shilling and said: 'It is but right that I should pay half of the reckoning, and as the whole affair is merely a shilling matter, I should feel obliged in being permitted to pay the whole, so, landlord, take the shilling and remember you are paid.' I then delivered the shilling to the

landlord, but had no sooner done so than the man in grey, starting up in violent agitation, wrested the money from the other, and flung it down on the table before me, saying:

'No, no, that will never do. I invited you in here to drink, and now you would pay for the liquor which I ordered. You English are free with your money, but you are sometimes free with it at the expense of people's feelings. I am a Welshman, and I know Englishmen consider all Welshmen hogs. But we are not hogs, mind you! for we have little feelings which hogs have not. Moreover, I would have you know that we have money, though perhaps not so much as the Saxon.' Then putting his hand into his pocket he pulled out a shilling, and giving it to the landlord said in Welsh: 'Now thou art paid, and mayst go thy ways till thou art again called for. I do not know why thou didst stay after thou hadst put down the ale. Thou didst know enough of me to know that thou didst run no risk of not being paid.'

'But,' said I, after the landlord had departed, 'I must insist on being my share. Did you not hear me say that I would give a quart of ale to see a poet?'

'A poet's face,' said the man in grey, 'should be common to all, even like that of the sun. He is no true poet, who would keep his face from the world.'

'But,' said I, 'the sun frequently hides his head from the world, behind a cloud.'

'Not so,' said the man in grey. 'The sun

does not hide his face, it is the cloud that hides it. The sun is always glad enough to be seen, and so is the poet. If both are occasionally hid, trust me it is no fault of theirs. Bear that in mind; and now pray take up your money.'

'The man is a gentleman,' thought I to myself, 'whether poet or not; but I really believe him to be a poet; were he not he could hardly talk in the manner I have just heard him.'

The man in grey now filled my glass, his own and that of his companion. The latter emptied his in a minute, not forgetting first to say 'the best prydydd in all the world!' the man in grey was also not slow to empty his own. The jug now passed rapidly between my two friends, for the poet seemed determined to have his full share of the beverage. I allowed the ale in my glass to remain untasted, and began to talk about the bards, and to quote from their works. I soon found that the man in grey knew quite as much of the old bards and their works as myself. In one instance he convicted me of a mistake.

I had quoted those remarkable lines in which an old bard, doubtless seeing the Menai Bridge by means of second sight, says: 'I will pass to the land of Mona notwithstanding the waters of the Menai, without waiting for the ebb'—and was feeling not a little proud of my erudition, when the man in grey after looking at me for a moment fixedly, asked me the name of the bard who composed them—'Sion Tudor,' I replied.

'There you are wrong,' said the man in grey; 'his name was not Sion Tudor, but Robert

Vychan, in English, Little Bob. Sion Tudor wrote an englyn on the Skerries whirlpool in the Menai; but it was Little Bob who wrote the stanza in which the future bridge over the Menai is hinted at.'

'You are right,' said I, 'you are right. Well, I am glad that all song and learning are not dead in Ynis Fon.'

'Dead,' said the man in grey, whose features began to be rather flushed, 'they are neither dead nor ever will be. There are plenty of poets in Anglesey—why, I can mention twelve, and amongst them, and not the least—pooh, what was I going to say? twelve there are, genuine Anglesey poets, born there, and living there for the love they bear their native land. When I say they all live in Anglesey, perhaps I am not quite accurate, for one of the dozen does not exactly live in Anglesey, but just over the bridge. He is an elderly man, but his awen, I assure you, is as young and vigorous as ever.'

'I shouldn't be at all surprised,' said I, 'if he was a certain ancient gentleman, from whom I obtained information yesterday, with respect to the birthplace of Gronwy Owen.'

'Very likely,' said the man in grey; 'well, if you have seen him consider yourself fortunate, for he is a genuine bard, and a genuine son of Anglesey, notwithstanding he lives across the water.'

'If he is the person I allude to,' said I, 'I am doubly fortunate, for I have seen two bards of Anglesey.'

'Sir,' said the man in grey, 'I consider myself quite as fortunate in having met such a Saxon as yourself, as it is possible for you to do, in having seen two bards of Ynis Fon.'

'I suppose you follow some pursuit besides bardism?' said I; 'I suppose you farm?'

'I do not farm,' said the man in grey, 'I keep an inn.'

'Keep an inn?' said I.

'Yes,' said the man in grey. 'The —— Arms at L——.'

'Sure,' said I, 'inn-keeping and bardism are not very cognate pursuits?'

'You are wrong,' said the man in grey; 'I believe the awen, or inspiration, is quite as much at home in the bar as in the barn, perhaps more. It is that belief which makes me tolerably satisfied with my position, and prevents me from asking Sir Richard to give me a farm instead of an inn.'

'I suppose,' said I, 'that Sir Richard is your landlord?'

'He is,' said the man in grey, 'and a right noble landlord too.'

'I suppose,' said I, 'that he is right proud of his tenant?'

'He is,' said the man in grey, 'and I am proud of my landlord, and will here drink his health. I have often said that if I were not what I am, I should wish to be Sir Richard.'

'You consider yourself his superior?' said I.

'Of course,' said the man in grey—'a baronet is a baronet; but a bard is a bard, you know—

I never forget what I am, and the respect due to my sublime calling. About a month ago I was seated in an upper apartment in a fit of rapture, there was a pen in my hand, and paper before me on the table, and likewise a jug of good ale, for I always find that the awen is most prodigal of her favours when a jug of good ale is before me. All of a sudden my wife came running up, and told me that Sir Richard was below, and wanted to speak to me. "Tell him to walk up," said I. "Are you mad?" said my wife. "Don't you know who Sir Richard is?" "I do," said I, "a baronet is a baronet, but a bard is a bard. Tell him to walk up." Well, my wife went and told Sir Richard that I was writing and could not come down, and that she hoped he would not object to walk up. "Certainly not; certainly not," said Sir Richard. "I shall be only too happy to ascend to a genius on his hill. You may be proud of such a husband, Mrs. W." And here it will be as well to tell you that my name is W.—J. W. of ——. Sir Richard then came up, and I received him with gravity and politeness. I did not rise of course, for I never forget myself a moment, but I told him to sit down, and added, that after I had finished the pennill I was engaged upon, I would speak to him. Well, Sir Richard smiled and sat down, and begged me not to hurry myself, for that he could wait. So I finished the pennill, deliberately, mind you, for I did not forget who I was, and then turning to Sir Richard entered upon business with him.'

'I suppose Sir Richard is a very good-tempered man?' said I.

'I don't know,' said the man in grey. 'I have seen Sir Richard in a devil of a passion, but never with me—no, no! Trust Sir Richard for not riding the high horse with me—a baronet is a baronet, but a bard is a bard; and that Sir Richard knows.'

'The greatest prydydd,' said the man of the tattered hat, emptying the last contents of the jug into his glass, 'the greatest prydydd that——'

'Well,' said I, 'you appear to enjoy very great consideration, and yet you were talking just now of being ill-used.'

'So I have been,' said the man in grey, 'I have been kept out of the eisteddfoddau—and then—what do you think? That fellow, the editor of the *Times*——'

'O,' said I, 'if you have anything to do with the editor of the *Times* you may, of course, expect nothing but shabby treatment, but what business could you have with him?'

'Why, I sent him some pennillion for insertion, and he did not insert them.'

'Were they in Welsh or English?'

'In Welsh, of course.'

'Well, then the man had some excuse for disregarding them—because you know the *Times* is written in English.'

'O, you mean the London *Times*,' said the man in grey. 'Pooh! I did not allude to that trumpery journal, but the Liverpool *Times*, the *Amserau*. I sent some pennillion to the editor

for insertion and he did not insert them. Peth a clwir cenfigen yn Saesneg ? '

'We call cenfigen in English envy,' said I; 'but as I told you before, envy will not always prevail.'

'You cannot imagine how pleased I am with your company,' said the man in grey. 'Landlord, landlord!'

'The greatest prydydd,' said the man of the tattered hat, 'the greatest prydydd.'

'Pray don't order any more on my account,' said I, 'as you see my glass is still full. I am about to start for Caer Gybi. Pray where are you bound for ?'

'For Bangor,' said the man in grey. 'I am going to the market.'

'Then I would advise you to lose no time,' said I, 'or you will infallibly be too late; it must now be one o'clock.'

'There is no market to-day,' said the man in grey, 'the market is to-morrow, which is Saturday. I like to take things leisurely, on which account, when I go to market, I generally set out the day before, in order that I may enjoy myself upon the road. I feel myself so happy here that I shall not stir till the evening. Now pray stay with me and my friend till then.'

'I cannot,' said I, 'if I stay longer here I shall never reach Caer Gybi to-night. But allow me to ask whether your business at L—— will not suffer by your spending so much time on the road to market ?'

'My wife takes care of the business whilst I am away,' said the man in grey, 'so it won't suffer much. Indeed it is she who chiefly conducts the business of the inn. I spend a good deal of time from home, for besides being a bard and innkeeper, I must tell you I am a horse-dealer and a jobber, and if I go to Bangor it is in the hope of purchasing a horse or pig worth the money.'

'And is your friend going to market too?' said I.

'My friend goes with me to assist me and bear me company. If I buy a pig he will help me to drive it home; if a horse, he will get up upon its back behind me. I might perhaps do without him, but I enjoy his company highly. He is sometimes rather indiscreet, but I do assure you he is exceedingly clever.'

'The greatest prydydd,' said the man of the bulged shoe, 'the greatest prydydd in the world.'

'O, I have no doubt of his cleverness,' said I, 'from what I have observed of him. Now before I go allow me to pay for your next jug of ale.'

'I will do no such thing,' said the man in grey. 'No farthing do you pay here for me or my friend either. But I will tell you what you may do. I am, as I have told you, an innkeeper as well as a bard. By the time you get to L—— you will be hot and hungry and in need of refreshment, and if you think proper to patronize my house, the —— Arms, by taking your chop

and pint there, you will oblige me. Landlord, some more ale.'

'The greatest prydydd,' said he of the bulged shoe, 'the greatest prydydd——'

'I will most certainly patronize your house,' said I to the man in grey, and shaking him heartily by the hand I departed.

CHAPTER XXXVIII

Inn at L——.—The Handmaid—The Decanter—Religious Gentleman—Truly Distressing—Sententiousness—Way to Pay Bills.

I PROCEEDED on my way in high spirits indeed, having now seen not only the tomb of the Tudors, but one of those sober poets for which Anglesey has always been so famous. The country was pretty, with here and there a hill, a harvest-field, a clump of trees or a grove. I soon reached L——, a small but neat town. 'Where is the —— Arms?' said I to a man whom I met.

'Yonder, sir, yonder,' said he, pointing to a magnificent structure on the left.

I went in and found myself in a spacious hall. A good-looking young woman, in a white dress with a profusion of pink ribbons, confronted me with a curtsey. 'A pint and a chop!' I exclaimed, with a flourish of my hand and at the top of my voice. The damsel gave a kind of start, and then, with something like a toss of the head, led the way into a very large room, on the left, in which were many tables, covered with snowy-white cloths, on which were plates, knives and forks, the latter seemingly of silver, tumblers and wine-glasses.

'I think you asked for a pint and a chop, sir?' said the damsel, motioning me to sit down at one of the tables.

'I did,' said I, as I sat down, 'let them be brought with all convenient speed, for I am in something of a hurry.'

'Very well, sir,' said the damsel, and then with another kind of toss of the head, she went away, not forgetting to turn half round, to take a furtive glance at me, before she went out of the door.

'Well,' said I, as I looked at the tables, with their snowy-white cloths, tumblers, wine-glasses and what not, and at the walls of the room glittering with mirrors, 'surely a poet never kept so magnificent an inn before; there must be something in this fellow besides the awen, or his house would never exhibit such marks of prosperity and good taste—there must be something in this fellow; though he pretends to be a wild, erratic son of Parnassus, he must have an eye to the main chance, a genius for turning the penny, or rather the sovereign, for the accommodation here is no penny accommodation, as I shall probably find. Perhaps, however, like myself, he has an exceedingly clever wife, who, whilst he is making verses, or running about the country swigging ale with people in bulged shoes, or buying pigs or glandered horses, looks after matters at home, drives a swinging trade, and keeps not only herself, but him respectable—but even in that event he must have a good deal of common sense in him, even like myself, who always allow my wife to buy and sell, carry money to the bank, draw cheques, inspect and pay tradesmen's bills, and transact all my real

business, whilst I myself pore over old books, walk about shires, discoursing with gypsies, under hedgerows, or with sober bards—in hedge ale-houses.' I continued musing in this manner until the handmaid made her appearance with a tray, on which were covers and a decanter, which she placed before me. 'What is that?' said I, pointing to a decanter.

'Only a pint of sherry, sir,' said she of the white dress and ribbons.

'Dear me,' said I, 'I ordered no sherry, I wanted some ale—a pint of ale.'

'You called for a pint, sir,' said the handmaid, 'but you mentioned no ale, and I naturally supposed that a gentleman of your appearance' —here she glanced at my dusty coat—'and speaking in the tone you did, would not condescend to drink ale with his chop; however, as it seems I have been mistaken, I can take away the sherry and bring you the ale.'

'Well, well,' said I, 'you can let the sherry remain; I do not like sherry, and am very fond of ale, but you can let the wine remain; upon the whole I am glad you brought it—indeed I merely came to do a good turn to the master of the house.'

'Thank you, sir,' said the handmaid.

'Are you his daughter?' said I.

'O no, sir,' said the handmaid reverently; 'only his waiter.'

'You may be proud to wait on him,' said I.

'I am, sir,' said the handmaid, casting down her eyes.

'I suppose he is much respected in the neighbourhood?' said I.

'Very much so, sir,' said the damsel, 'especially amidst the connection.'

'The connection,' said I. 'Ah, I see, he has extensive consanguinity, most Welsh have. But,' I continued, 'there is such a thing as envy in the world, and there are a great many malicious people in the world, who speak against him.'

'A great many, sir, but we take what they say from whence it comes.'

'You do quite right,' said I. 'Has your master written any poetry lately?'

'Sir!' said the damsel, staring at me.

'Any poetry,' said I, 'any pennillion?'

'No, sir,' said the damsel; 'my master is a respectable man and would scorn to do anything of the kind.'

'Why,' said I, 'is not your master a bard as well as an innkeeper?'

'My master, sir, is an innkeeper,' said the damsel; 'but as for the other, I don't know what you mean.'

'A bard,' said I, 'is a prydydd, a person who makes verses—pennillion; does not your master make them?'

'My master make them? No, sir; my master is a religious gentleman, and would scorn to make such profane stuff.'

'Well,' said I, 'he told me he did within the last two hours. I met him at Dyffryn Gaint, along with another man, and he took me into the public-house, where we had a deal of discourse.

'You met my master at Dyffryn Gaint?' said the damsel.

'Yes,' said I, 'and he treated me with ale, told me that he was a poet, and that he was going to Bangor to buy a horse or a pig.'

'I don't see how that could be, sir,' said the damsel; 'my master is at present in the house, rather unwell, and has not been out for the last three days—there must be some mistake.'

'Mistake,' said I. 'Isn't this the —— Arms?'

'Yes, sir, it is.'

'And isn't your master's name W——?'

'No, sir, my master's name is H——, and a more respectable man——'

'Well,' said I, interrupting her—'all I can say is that I met a man in Dyffryn Gaint, who treated me with ale, told me that his name was W——, that he was a prydydd and kept the —— Arms at L——.'

'Well,' said the damsel, 'now I remember, there is a person of that name in L——, and he also keeps a house, which he calls the —— Arms, but it is only a public-house.'

'But,' said I, 'is he not a prydydd, an illustrious poet; does he not write pennillion which everybody admires?'

'Well,' said the damsel, 'I believe he does write things which he calls pennillion, but everybody laughs at them.'

'Come, come,' said I, 'I will not hear the productions of a man who treated me with ale, spoken of with disrespect. I am afraid that you are one of his envious maligners, of which he

gave me to understand that he had a great many.'

'Envious, sir! not I indeed; and if I were disposed to be envious of anybody it would not be of him; O dear, why he is——'

'A bard of Anglesey,' said I, interrupting her, 'such a person as Gronwy Owen describes in the following lines, which, by the bye, were written upon himself:—

> "Where'er he goes he 's sure to find
> Respectful looks and greetings kind."'

'I tell you that it was out of respect to that man that I came to this house. Had I not thought that he kept it, I should not have entered it and called for a pint and chop—how distressing! how truly distressing!'

'Well, sir,' said the damsel, 'if there is anything distressing you have only to thank your acquaintance who chooses to call his mug-house by the name of a respectable hotel, for I would have you know that this is an hotel, and kept by a respectable and religious man, and not kept by ——. However, I scorn to say more, especially as I might be misinterpreted. Sir, there 's your pint and chop, and if you wish for anything else you can ring. Envious, indeed, of such—Marry come up!' and with a toss of her head, higher than any she had hitherto given, she bounced out of the room.

Here was a pretty affair! I had entered the house and ordered the chop and pint in the belief that by so doing I was patronizing the

poet, and lo, I was not in the poet's house, and my order would benefit a person for whom, however respectable and religious, I cared not one rush. Moreover, the pint which I had ordered appeared in the guise not of ale, which I am fond of, but of sherry, for which I have always entertained a sovereign contempt, as a silly, sickly compound, the use of which will transform a nation, however bold and warlike by nature, into a race of sketchers, scribblers and punsters, in fact into what Englishmen are at the present day. But who was to blame? Why, who but the poet and myself? The poet ought to have told me that there were two houses in L—— bearing the sign of the —— Arms, and that I must fight shy of the hotel and steer for the pot-house, and when I gave the order I certainly ought to have been a little more explicit; when I said a pint I ought to have added—of ale. Sententiousness is a fine thing sometimes, but not always. By being sententious here, I got sherry, which I dislike, instead of ale which I like, and should have to pay more for what was disagreeable, than I should have had to pay for what was agreeable. Yet I had merely echoed the poet's words in calling for a pint and chop, so after all the poet was to blame for both mistakes. But perhaps he meant that I should drink sherry at his house, and when he advised me to call for a pint, he meant a pint of sherry. But the maid had said he kept a pot-house, and no pot-houses have wine-licences; but the maid after all might be

an envious baggage, and no better than she should be. But what was now to be done? Why, clearly make the best of the matter, eat the chop and leave the sherry. So I commenced eating the chop, which was by this time nearly cold. After eating a few morsels I looked at the sherry: 'I may as well take a glass,' said I. So with a wry face I poured myself out a glass.

'What detestable stuff!' said I, after I had drunk it. 'However, as I shall have to pay for it I may as well go through with it.' So I poured myself out another glass, and by the time I had finished the chop I had finished the sherry also.

And now what was I to do next? Why, my best advice seemed to be to pay my bill and depart. But I had promised the poet to patronize his house, and had by mistake ordered and despatched a pint and chop in a house which was not the poet's. Should I now go to his house and order a pint and chop there? Decidedly not! I had patronized a house which I believed to be the poet's; if I patronized the wrong one, the fault was his, not mine—he should have been more explicit. I had performed my promise, at least in intention.

Perfectly satisfied with the conclusion I had come to, I rang the bell. 'The bill?' said I to the handmaid.

'Here it is!' said she, placing a strip of paper in my hand.

I looked at the bill, and, whether moderate or immoderate, paid it with a smiling countenance,

commended the entertainment highly, and gave the damsel something handsome for her trouble in waiting on me.

Reader, please to bear in mind that as all bills must be paid, it is much more comfortable to pay them with a smile than with a frown, and that it is much better by giving sixpence or a shilling to a poor servant, which you will never miss at the year's end, to be followed from the door of an inn by good wishes, than by giving nothing to be pursued by cutting silence, or the yet more cutting Hm!

'Sir,' said the good-looking, well-ribboned damsel, 'I wish you a pleasant journey, and whenever you please again to honour our establishment with your presence, both my master and myself shall be infinitely obliged to you.'

CHAPTER XXXIX

Oats and Methodism—The Little Girl—Tŷ Gwyn—Bird of the Roof—Purest English—Railroads—Inconsistency—The Boots.

It might be about four in the afternoon when I left L——, bound for Pen Caer Gybi, or Holy Head, seventeen miles distant. I reached the top of the hill on the west of the little town, and then walked briskly forward. The country looked poor and mean—on my right was a field of oats, on my left a Methodist chapel—oats and Methodism! what better symbols of poverty and meanness?

I went onward a long way, the weather was broiling hot, and I felt thirsty. On the top of a long ascent stood a house by the roadside. I went to the door and knocked—no answer—'Oes neb yn y tŷ?' said I.

'Oes!' said an infantine voice.

I opened the door and saw a little girl. 'Have you any water?' said I.

'No,' said the child, 'but I have this,' and she brought me some buttermilk in a basin. I just tasted it, gave the child a penny and blessed her.

'Oes genoch tad?'

'No,' said she; 'but I have a mam.' Tad im mam; blessed sounds; in all languages expressing the same blessed things.

After walking for some hours I saw a tall blue hill in the far distance before me. 'What is the name of that hill?' said I to a woman whom I met.

'Pen Caer Gybi,' she replied.

Soon after I came to a village near to a rocky gulley. On inquiring the name of the village, I was told it was Llan yr Afon, or the church of the river.. I passed on; the country was neither grand nor pretty—it exhibited a kind of wildness, however, which did not fail to interest me—there were stones, rocks and furze in abundance. Turning round the corner of a hill, I observed through the mists of evening, which began to gather about me, what seemed to be rather a genteel house on the roadside, on my left, and a little way behind it a strange kind of monticle, on which I thought I observed tall upright stones. Quickening my pace, I soon came parallel with the house, which as I drew nigh, ceased to look like a genteel house, and exhibited an appearance of great desolation. It was a white, or rather grey structure of some antiquity. It was evidently used as a farm-house, for there was a yard adjoining to it, in which were stacks and agricultural implements. Observing two men in the yard, I went in. They were respectable, farm-looking men, between forty and fifty; one had on a coat and hat, the other a cap and jacket. 'Good evening,' I said in Welsh.

'Good evening,' they replied in the same language, looking inquiringly at me.

'What is the name of this place?' said I.

'It is called Tŷ gwyn,' said the man of the hat.

'On account of its colour, I suppose?' said I.

'Just so,' said the man of the hat.

'It looks old,' said I.

'And it is old,' he replied. 'In the time of the Papists it was one of their chapels.'

'Does it belong to you?' I demanded.

'O no, it belongs to one Mr. Sparrow from Liverpool. I am his bailiff, and this man is a carpenter who is here doing a job for him.'

Here ensued a pause, which was broken by the man of the hat saying in English, to the man of the cap:

'Who can this strange fellow be? he has not a word of English, and though he speaks Welsh his Welsh sounds very different from ours. Who can he be?'

'I am sure I don't know,' said the other.

'I know who he is,' said the first, 'he comes from Llydaw, or Armorica, which was peopled from Britain estalom, and where I am told the real old Welsh language is still spoken.'

'I think I heard you mention the word Llydaw?' said I, to the man of the hat.

'Ah,' said the man of the hat, speaking Welsh, 'I was right after all; oh, I could have sworn you were Llydaweg. Well, how are the descendants of the ancient Britons getting on in Llydaw?'

'They were getting on tolerably well,' said I, 'when I last saw them, though all things do not go exactly as they could wish.'

'Of course not,' said he of the hat. 'We too

have much to complain of here; the lands are almost entirely taken possession of by Saxons, wherever you go you will find them settled, and a Saxon bird of the roof must build its nest in Gwyn dŷ.'

'You call a sparrow in your Welsh a bird of the roof, do you not?' said I.

'We do,' said he of the hat. 'You speak Welsh very well considering you were not born in Wales. It is really surprising that the men of Llydaw should speak the iaith so pure as they do.'

'The Welsh when they went over there,' said I, 'took effectual means that their descendants should speak good Welsh, if all tales be true.'

'What means?' said he of the hat.

'Why,' said I, 'after conquering the country they put all the men to death, and married the women, but before a child was born they cut out all the women's tongues, so that the only language the children heard when they were born was pure Cumraeg. What do you think of that?'

'Why, that it was a cute trick,' said he of the hat.

'A more clever trick I never heard,' said he of the cap.

'Have you any memorials in the neighbourhood of the old Welsh?' said I.

'What do you mean?' said the man of the hat.

'Any altars of the Druids?' said I; 'any stone tables?'

'None,' said the man of the hat.

'What may those stones be?' said I, pointing to the stones which had struck my attention.

'Mere common rocks,' said the man.

'May I go and examine them?' said I.

'O yes!' said he of the hat, 'and we will go with you.'

We went to the stones, which were indeed common rocks, and which when I reached them presented quite a different appearance from that which they presented to my eye when I viewed them from afar.

'Are there many altars of the Druids in Llydaw?' said the man of the hat.

'Plenty,' said I, 'but those altars are older than the time of the Welsh colonists, and were erected by the old Gauls.'

'Well,' said the man of the cap, 'I am glad to have seen a man of Llydaw.'

'Whom do you call a man of Llydaw?' said I.

'Whom but yourself?' said he of the hat.

'I am not a man of Llydaw,' said I, in English, 'but of Norfolk, where the people eat the best dumplings in the world, and speak the purest English. Now a thousand thanks for your civility. I would have some more chat with you, but night is coming on, and I am bound to Holy Head.'

Then leaving the men staring after me, I bent my steps towards Holy Head.

I passed by a place called Llan something, standing lonely on its hill. The country around looked sad and desolate. It is true night had come on when I saw it.

On I hurried. The voices of children sounded sweetly at a distance across the wild champaign on my left.

It grew darker and darker. On I hurried along the road; at last I came to lone, lordly groves. On my right was an open gate and a lodge. I went up to the lodge. The door was open, and in a little room I beheld a nice-looking old lady sitting by a table, on which stood a lighted candle, with her eyes fixed on a large book.

'Excuse me,' said I; 'but who owns this property?'

The old lady looked up from her book, which appeared to be a Bible, without the slightest surprise, though I certainly came upon her unawares, and answered:

'Mr. John Wynn.'

I shortly passed through a large village, or rather town, the name of which I did not learn. I then went on for a mile or two, and saw a red light at some distance. The road led nearly up to it, and then diverged towards the north. Leaving the road I made towards the light by a lane, and soon came to a railroad station.

'You won't have long to wait, sir,' said a man—'the train to Holy Head will be here presently.'

'How far is it to Holy Head?' said I.

'Two miles, sir, and the fare is only sixpence.'

'I despise railroads,' said I, 'and those who travel by them,' and without waiting for an answer, returned to the road. Presently I heard the train—it stopped for a minute at the station,

and then continuing its course passed me on my left hand, voiding fierce sparks, and making a terrible noise—the road was a melancholy one; my footsteps sounded hollow upon it. I seemed to be its only traveller—a wall extended for a long, long way on my left. At length I came to a turnpike. I felt desolate and wished to speak to somebody. I tapped at the window, at which there was a light; a woman opened it. 'How far to Holy Head?' said I in English.

'Dim Saesneg,' said the woman.

I repeated my question in Welsh.

'Two miles,' said she.

'Still two miles to Holy Head by the road,' thought I. 'Nos da,' said I to the woman and sped along. At length I saw water on my right, seemingly a kind of bay, and presently a melancholy ship. I doubled my pace, which was before tolerably quick, and soon saw a noble-looking edifice on my left, brilliantly lighted up. 'What a capital inn that would make,' said I, looking at it wistfully, as I passed it. Presently I found myself in the midst of a poor, dull, ill-lighted town.

'Where is the inn?' said I to a man.

'The inn, sir; you have passed it. The inn is yonder,' he continued, pointing towards the noble-looking edifice.

'What, is that the inn?' said I.

'Yes, sir, the railroad hotel—and a first-rate hotel it is.'

'And are there no other inns?'

'Yes, but they are all poor places. No gent

puts up at them—all the gents by the railroad put up at the railroad hotel.'

What was I to do? after turning up my nose at the railroad, was I to put up at its hotel? Surely to do so would be hardly acting with consistency. 'Ought I not rather to go to some public-house, frequented by captains of fishing-smacks, and be put in a bed a foot too short for me,' said I, as I reflected on my last night's couch at Mr. Pritchard's. 'No, that won't do —I shall go to the hotel, I have money in my pocket, and a person with money in his pocket has surely a right to be inconsistent if he pleases.'

So I turned back and entered the railroad hotel with lofty port and with sounding step, for I had twelve sovereigns in my pocket, besides a half one, and some loose silver, and feared not to encounter the gaze of any waiter or landlord in the land. 'Send boots!' I roared to the waiter, as I flung myself down in an arm-chair in a magnificent coffee-room. 'What the deuce are you staring at? send boots can't you, and ask what I can have for dinner.'

'Yes, sir,' said the waiter, and with a low bow departed.

'These boots are rather dusty,' said the boots, a grey-haired, venerable-looking man, after he had taken off my thick, solid, square-toed boots. 'I suppose you came walking from the railroad?'

'Confound the railroad!' said I. 'I came walking from Bangor. I would have you know that I have money in my pocket, and can afford

to walk. I am fond of the beauties of nature; now it is impossible to see much of the beauties of nature unless you walk. I am likewise fond of poetry, and take especial delight in inspecting the birthplaces and haunts of poets. It is because I am fond of poetry, poets and their haunts, that I am come to Anglesey. Anglesey does not abound in the beauties of nature, but there never was such a place for poets; you meet a poet, or the birthplace of a poet, everywhere.'

'Did your honour ever hear of Gronwy Owen?' said the old man.

'I have,' I replied, 'and yesterday I visited his birthplace; so you have heard of Gronwy Owen?'

'Heard of him, your honour; yes, and read his works. That "Cowydd y Farn" of his is a wonderful poem.'

'You say right,' said I; 'the "Cowydd of Judgment" contains some of the finest things ever written—that description of the toppling down of the top crag of Snowdon, at the day of Judgment, beats anything in Homer.'

'Then there was Lewis Morris, your honour,' said the old man, 'who gave Gronwy his education, and wrote "The Lasses of Meirion"—and——'

'And "The Cowydd to the Snail,"' said I, interrupting him—'a wonderful man he was.'

'I am rejoiced to see your honour in our house,' said boots; 'I never saw an English gentleman before who knew so much about Welsh poetry,

nor a Welsh one either. Ah, if your honour is fond of poets and their places you did right to come to Anglesey—and your honour was right in saying that you can't stir a step without meeting one; you have an example of the truth of that in me—for to tell your honour the truth, I am a poet myself, and no bad one either.'

Then tucking the dusty boots under his arm, the old man with a low congee, and a 'Good night, your honour!' shuffled out of the room.

CHAPTER XL

Caer Gyby—Lewis Morris—Noble Character.

I DINED or rather supped well at the Railroad Inn—I beg its pardon, Hotel, for the word Inn at the present day is decidedly vulgar. I likewise slept well; how could I do otherwise, passing the night, as I did, in an excellent bed in a large, cool, quiet room? I arose rather late, went down to the coffee-room and took my breakfast leisurely, after which I paid my bill and strolled forth to observe the wonders of the place.

Caer Gybi, or Cybi's town, is situated on the southern side of a bay on the north-western side of Anglesey. Close to it on the south-west is a very high headland called in Welsh, Pen Caer Gybi, or the head of Cybi's city, and in English Holy Head. On the north, across the bay, is another mountain of equal altitude, which if I am not mistaken bears in Welsh the name of Mynydd Llanfair, or Saint Mary's Mount. It is called Cybi's town from one Cybi, who about the year 500 built a college here to which youths noble and ignoble resorted from far and near. He was a native of Dyfed or Pembrokeshire, and was a friend and for a long time a fellow-labourer of Saint David. Besides being learned, according to the standard of the time, he was a

great walker, and from bronzing his countenance by frequent walking in the sun was generally called Cybi Velin, which means tawny or yellow Cybi.

So much for Cybi, and his town! And now something about one whose memory haunted me much more than that of Cybi during my stay at Holy Head.

Lewis Morris was born at a place called Tref y Beirdd, in Anglesey, in the year 1700. Anglesey, or Mona, has given birth to many illustrious men, but few, upon the whole, entitled to more honourable mention than himself. From a humble situation in life, for he served an apprenticeship to a cooper at Holy Head, he raised himself by his industry and talents to affluence and distinction, became a landed proprietor in the county of Cardigan, and inspector of the royal domains and mines in Wales. Perhaps a man more generally accomplished never existed; he was a first-rate mechanic, an expert navigator, a great musician, both in theory and practice, and a poet of singular excellence. Of him it was said, and with truth, that he could build a ship and sail it, frame a harp and make it speak, write an ode and set it to music. Yet that saying, eulogistic as it is, is far from expressing all the vast powers and acquirements of Lewis Morris. Though self-taught, he was confessedly the best Welsh scholar of his age, and was well-versed in those cognate dialects of the Welsh—the Cornish, Armoric, Highland Gaelic and Irish. He was likewise well ac-

quainted with Hebrew, Greek and Latin, had studied Anglo-Saxon with some success, and was a writer of bold and vigorous English. He was besides a good general antiquary, and for knowledge of ancient Welsh customs, traditions, and superstitions had no equal. Yet all has not been said which can be uttered in his praise; he had qualities of mind which entitled him to higher esteem than any accomplishment connected with intellect or skill. Amongst these were his noble generosity and sacrifice of self for the benefit of others. Weeks and months he was in the habit of devoting to the superintendance of the affairs of the widow and the fatherless: one of his principal delights was to assist merit, to bring it before the world and to procure for it its proper estimation: it was he who first discovered the tuneful genius of blind Parry; it was he who first put the harp into his hand; it was he who first gave him scientific instruction; it was he who cheered him with encouragement and assisted him with gold. It was he who instructed the celebrated Evan Evans in the ancient language of Wales, enabling that talented but eccentric individual to read the pages of the Red Book of Hergest as easily as those of the Welsh Bible; it was he who corrected his verses with matchless skill, refining and polishing them till they became well worthy of being read by posterity; it was he who gave him advice, which, had it been followed, would have made the Prydydd Hir, as he called himself, one of the most illustrious Welshmen of the last

century ; and it was he who first told his countrymen that there was a youth of Anglesey whose genius, if properly encouraged, promised fair to rival that of Milton : one of the most eloquent letters ever written is one by him, in which he descants upon the beauties of certain poems of Gronwy Owen, the latent genius of whose early boyhood he had observed, whom he had clothed, educated and assisted up to the period when he was ordained a minister of the Church, and whom he finally rescued from a state bordering on starvation in London, procuring for him an honourable appointment in the New World. Immortality to Lewis Morris ! But immortality he has won, even as his illustrious pupil has said, who in his elegy upon his benefactor, written in America in the four-and-twenty measures, at a time when Gronwy had not heard the Welsh language spoken for more than twenty years, has words to the following effect :—

'As long as Bardic lore shall last, science and learning be cherished, the language and blood of the Britons undefiled, song be heard on Parnassus, heaven and earth be in existence, foam be on the surge, and water in the river, the name of Lewis of Mon shall be held in grateful remembrance.'

CHAPTER XLI

The Pier—Irish Reapers—Wild Irish Face—Father Toban —The Herd of Swine—Latin Blessing.

THE day was as hot as the preceding one. I walked slowly towards the west, and presently found myself upon a pier, or breakwater, at the mouth of the harbour. A large steamer lay at a little distance within the pier. There were fishing-boats on both sides, the greater number on the outer side, which lies towards the hill of Holy Head. On the shady side of the breakwater under the wall were two or three dozen of Irish reapers; some were lying asleep, others in parties of two or three were seated with their backs against the wall, and were talking Irish; these last all appeared to be well-made, middle-sized young fellows, with rather a ruffianly look; they stared at me as I passed. The whole party had shillealahs either in their hands or by their sides. I went to the extremity of the pier, where was a little lighthouse, and then turned back. As I again drew near the Irish, I heard a hubbub and observed a great commotion amongst them. All, whether those whom I had seen sitting, or those whom I had seen reclining, had got or were getting on their legs. As I passed them they were all standing up, and their eyes were fixed upon me with a strange kind of expression,

partly of wonder, methought, partly of respect. 'Yes, 'tis he, sure enough,' I heard one whisper. On I went, and at about thirty yards from the last I stopped, turned round and leaned against the wall. All the Irish were looking at me—presently they formed into knots and began to discourse very eagerly in Irish, though in an undertone. At length I observed a fellow going from one knot to the other, exchanging a few words with each. After he had held communication with all he nodded his head, and came towards me with a quick step; the rest stood silent and motionless with their eyes turned in the direction in which I was, and in which he was advancing. He stopped within a yard of me and took off his hat. He was an athletic fellow of about twenty-eight, dressed in brown frieze. His features were swarthy, and his eyes black; in every lineament of his countenance was a jumble of savagery and roguishness. I never saw a more genuine wild Irish face—there he stood looking at me full in the face, his hat in one hand and his shillealah in the other.

'Well, what do you want?' said I, after we had stared at each other about half a minute.

'Sure, I 'm just come on the part of the boys and myself to beg a bit of a favour of your reverence.'

'Reverence,' said I, 'what do you mean by styling me reverence?'

'Och sure, why because to be styled your reverence is the right of your reverence.'

'Pray what do you take me for?'

'Och sure, we knows your reverence very well.'

'Well, who am I?'

'Och, why Father Toban to be sure.'

'And who knows me to be Father Toban?'

'Och, a boy here knows your reverence to be Father Toban.'

'Where is that boy?'

'Here he stands, your reverence.'

'Are you that boy?'

'I am, your reverence.'

'And you told the rest that I was Father Toban?'

'I did, your reverence.'

'And you know me to be Father Toban?'

'I do, your reverence.'

'How do you know me to be Father Toban?'

'Och, why because many 's the good time that I have heard your reverence, Father Toban, say mass.'

'And what is it you want me to do?'

'Why, see here, your reverence, we are going to embark in the dirty steamer yonder for ould Ireland, which starts as soon as the tide serves, and we want your reverence to bless us before we goes.'

'You want me to bless you?'

'We do, your reverence, we want you to spit out a little bit of a blessing upon us before we goes on board.'

'And what good would my blessing do you?'

'All kinds of good, your reverence; it would prevent the dirty steamer from catching fire,

your reverence, or from going down, your reverence, or from running against the blackguard Hill of Howth in the mist, provided there should be one.'

'And suppose I were to tell you that I am not Father Toban?'

'Och, your reverence will never think of doing that.'

'Would you believe me if I did?'

'We would not, your reverence.'

'If I were to swear that I am not Father Toban?'

'We would not, your reverence.'

'On the evangiles?'

'We would not, your reverence.'

'On the Cross?'

'We would not, your reverence.'

'And suppose I were to refuse to give you a blessing?'

'Och, your reverence will never refuse to bless the poor boys.'

'But suppose I were to refuse?'

'Why, in such a case, which by the bye is altogether impossible, we should just make bould to give your reverence a good big bating.'

'You would break my head?'

'We would, your reverence.'

'Kill me?'

'We would, your reverence.'

'You would really put me to death?'

'We would not, your reverence.'

'And what's the difference between killing and putting to death?'

'Och, sure there 's all the difference in the world. Killing manes only a good big bating, such as every Irishman is used to, and which your reverence would get over long before matins, whereas putting your reverence to death would prevent your reverence from saying mass for ever and a day.'

'And you are determined on having a blessing?'

'We are, your reverence.'

'By hook or by crook?'

'By crook or by hook, your reverence.'

'Before I bless you, will you answer me a question or two?'

'I will, your reverence.'

'Are you not a set of great big blackguards?'

'We are, your reverence.'

'Without one good quality?'

'We are, your reverence.'

'Would it not be quite right to saddle and bridle you all, and ride you violently down Holy Head or the Giant's Causeway into the waters, causing you to perish there, like the herd of swine of old?'

'It would, your reverence.'

'And knowing and confessing all this you have the cheek to come and ask me for a blessing?'

'We have, your reverence.'

'Well, how shall I give the blessing?'

'Och, sure your reverence knows very well how to give it.'

'Shall I give it in Irish?'

'Och, no, your reverence—a blessing in Irish is no blessing at all.'

'In English?'

'Och, murder, no, your reverence, God preserve us all from an English blessing!'

'In Latin?'

'Yes, sure, your reverence; in what else should you bless us but in holy Latin?'

'Well, then, prepare yourselves.'

'We will, your reverence—stay one moment whilst I whisper to the boys that your reverence is about to bestow your blessing upon us.'

Then turning to the rest who all this time had kept their eyes fixed intently upon us, he bellowed with the voice of a bull:

'Down on your marrow bones, ye sinners, for his reverence Toban is about to bless us all in holy Latin.'

He then flung himself on his knees on the pier, and all his countrymen, baring their heads, followed his example—yes, there knelt thirty bare-headed Eirionaich on the pier of Caer Gybi beneath the broiling sun. I gave them the best Latin blessing I could remember, out of two or three which I had got by memory out of an old Popish book of devotion, which I bought in my boyhood at a stall. Then turning to the deputy I said, 'Well, now are you satisfied?'

'Sure, I have a right to be satisfied, your reverence; and so have we all—sure we can now all go on board the dirty steamer, without fear of fire or water, or the blackguard Hill of Howth either.'

'Then get up, and tell the rest to get up, and please to know and let the rest know, that I do

not choose to receive farther trouble, either by word or look, from any of ye, as long as I remain here.'

'Your reverence shall be obeyed in all things,' said the fellow, getting up. Then walking away to his companions he cried, 'Get up, boys, and plase to know that his reverence Toban is not to be farther troubled by being looked at or spoken to by any one of us, as long as he remains upon this dirty pier.'

'Divil a bit farther trouble shall he have from us!' exclaimed many a voice, as the rest of the party arose from their knees.

In half a minute they disposed themselves in much the same manner as that in which they were when I first saw them—some flung themselves again to sleep under the wall, some seated themselves with their backs against it, and laughed and chatted, but without taking any notice of me; those who sat and chatted took, or appeared to take, as little notice as those who lay and slept of his reverence Father Toban.

CHAPTER XLII

Gage of Suffolk—Fellow in a Turban—Town of Holyhead—Father Boots—An Expedition—Holyhead and Finisterræ—Gryffith ab Cynan—The Fairies' Well.

LEAVING the pier I turned up a street to the south, and was not long before I arrived at a kind of market-place, where were carts and stalls, and on the ground, on cloths, apples and plums, and abundance of greengages,—the latter, when good, decidedly the finest fruit in the world, a fruit for the introduction of which into England the English have to thank one Gage, of an ancient Suffolk family, at present extinct, after whose name the fruit derives the latter part of its appellation. Strolling about the market-place I came in contact with a fellow dressed in a turban and dirty blue linen robes and trowsers. He bore a bundle of papers in his hand, one of which he offered to me. I asked him who he was.

'Arap,' he replied.

He had a dark, cunning, roguish countenance, with small eyes, and had all the appearance of a Jew. I spoke to him in what Arabic I could command on a sudden, and he jabbered to me in a corrupt dialect, giving me a confused account of a captivity which he had undergone amidst savage Mahometans. At last I asked him what religion he was of.

'The Christian,' he replied.

'Have you ever been of the Jewish?' said I.

He returned no answer save by a grin.

I took the paper, gave him a penny, and then walked away. The paper contained an account in English of how the bearer, the son of Christian parents, had been carried into captivity by two Mahometan merchants, a father and son, from whom he had escaped with the greatest difficulty.

'Pretty fools,' said I, 'must any people have been who ever stole you; but O what fools if they wished to keep you after they had got you!'

The paper was stuffed with religious and anti-slavery cant, and merely wanted a little of the teetotal nonsense to be a perfect specimen of humbug.

I strolled forward, encountering more carts and more heaps of greengages; presently I turned to the right by a street, which led some way up the hill. The houses were tolerably large and all white. The town, with its white houses placed by the seaside, on the skirt of a mountain, beneath a blue sky and a broiling sun, put me something in mind of a Moorish piratical town, in which I had once been. Becoming soon tired of walking about, without any particular aim, in so great a heat, I determined to return to the inn, call for ale, and deliberate on what I had best next do. So I returned and called for ale. The ale which was brought was not ale which I am particularly fond of. The ale which I am fond of is ale about nine or ten months old, somewhat hard, tasting well of the malt and little of the hop—ale such as farmers, and

noblemen too, of the good old time, when farmers' daughters did not play on pianos and noblemen did not sell their game, were in the habit of offering to both high and low, and drinking themselves. The ale which was brought me was thin washy stuff, which, though it did not taste much of hop, tasted still less of malt, made and sold by one Allsopp, who I am told calls himself a squire and a gentleman—as he certainly may with quite as much right as many a lord calls himself a nobleman and a gentleman; for surely it is not a fraction more trumpery to make and sell ale than to fatten and sell game. The ale of the Saxon squire, for Allsopp is decidedly an old Saxon name, however unakin to the practice of old Saxon squires the selling of ale may be, was drinkable, for it was fresh, and the day, as I have said before, exceedingly hot; so I took frequent draughts out of the shining metal tankard in which it was brought, deliberating, both whilst drinking, and in the intervals of drinking, on what I had next best do. I had some thoughts of crossing to the northern side of the bay, then, bearing to the north-east, wend my way to Amlwch, follow the windings of the seashore to Mathafarn eithaf and Pentraeth Coch, and then return to Bangor, after which I could boast that I had walked round the whole of Anglesey, and indeed trodden no inconsiderable part of the way twice. Before coming, however, to any resolution, I determined to ask the advice of my friend the boots on the subject. So I finished my ale, and sent word by the waiter

that I wished to speak to him; he came forthwith, and after communicating my deliberations to him in a few words I craved his counsel. The old man, after rubbing his right forefinger behind his right ear for about a quarter of a minute, inquired if I meant to return to Bangor, and on my telling him that it would be necessary for me to do so, as I intended to walk back to Llangollen by Caernarvon and Beth Gelert, strongly advised me to return to Bangor by the railroad train, which would start at seven in the evening, and would convey me thither in an hour and a half. I told him that I hated railroads, and received for answer that he had no particular liking for them himself, but that he occasionally made use of them on a pinch, and supposed that I likewise did the same. I then observed, that if I followed his advice I should not see the north side of the island, nor its principal town Amlwch, and received for answer that if I never did, the loss would not be great —that as for Amlwch it was a poor poverty-stricken place—the inn a shabby affair—the master a very so-so individual, and the boots a fellow without either wit or literature. That upon the whole he thought I might be satisfied with what I had seen already, for after having visited Owen Tudor's tomb, Caer Gybi and his hotel, I had in fact seen the cream of Mona. I then said that I had one objection to make, which was that I really did not know how to employ the time till seven o'clock, for that I had seen all about the town.

'But has your honour ascended the Head?' demanded Father Boots.

'No,' said I, 'I have not.'

'Then,' said he, 'I will soon find your honour ways and means to spend the time agreeably till the starting of the train. Your honour shall ascend the Head under the guidance of my nephew, a nice, intelligent lad, your honour, and always glad to earn a shilling or two. By the time your honour has seen all the wonders of the Head and returned, it will be five o'clock. Your honour can then dine, and after dinner trifle away the minutes over your wine or brandy-and-water till seven, when your honour can step into a first-class for Bangor.'

I was struck with the happy manner in which he had removed the difficulty in question, and informed him that I was determined to follow his advice. He hurried away, and presently returned with his nephew, to whom I offered half-a-crown provided he would show me all about Pen Caer Gyby. He accepted my offer with evident satisfaction, and we lost no time in setting out upon our expedition.

We had to pass over a great deal of broken ground, sometimes ascending, sometimes descending, before we found ourselves upon the side of what may actually be called the headland. Shaping our course westward we came to the vicinity of a lighthouse standing on the verge of a precipice, the foot of which was washed by the sea.

Leaving the lighthouse on our right we fol-

lowed a steep winding path which at last brought us to the top of the pen or summit, rising according to the judgment which I formed, about six hundred feet from the surface of the sea. Here was a level spot some twenty yards across, in the middle of which stood a heap of stones or cairn. I asked the lad whether this cairn bore a name, and received for answer that it was generally called Bar-cluder y Cawr Glâs, words which seem to signify the top heap of the Grey Giant.

'Some king, giant, or man of old renown lies buried beneath this cairn,' said I. 'Whoever he may be, I trust he will excuse me for mounting it, seeing that I do so with no disrespectful spirit.' I then mounted the cairn, exclaiming :—

> 'Who lies 'neath the cairn on the headland hoar,
> His hand yet holding his broad claymore,
> Is it Beli, the son of Benlli Gawr ?'

There stood I on the cairn of the Grey Giant, looking around me. The prospect, on every side, was noble : the blue interminable sea to the west and north ; the whole stretch of Mona to the east ; and far away to the south the mountainous region of Eryri, comprising some of the most romantic hills in the world. In some respects this Pen Santaidd, this holy headland, reminded me of Finisterræ, the Gallegan promontory which I had ascended some seventeen years before, whilst engaged in battling the Pope with the sword of the Gospel in his favourite territory. Both are bold, bluff headlands look-

ing to the west, both have huge rocks in their vicinity, rising from the bosom of the brine. For a time, as I stood on the cairn, I almost imagined myself on the Gallegan hill; much the same scenery presented itself as there, and a sun equally fierce struck upon my head as that which assailed it on the Gallegan hill. For a time all my thoughts were of Spain. It was not long, however, before I bethought me that my lot was now in a different region, that I had done with Spain for ever, after doing for her all that lay in the power of a lone man, who had never in this world anything to depend upon, but God, and his own slight strength. Yes, I had done with Spain, and was now in Wales; and, after a slight sigh, my thoughts became all intensely Welsh. I thought on the old times when Mona was the grand seat of Druidical superstition, when adoration was paid to Dwy Fawr, and Dwy Fach, the sole survivors of the apocryphal Deluge; to Hu the Mighty and his plough; to Ceridwen and her cauldron; to András the Horrible; to Wyn ab Nudd, Lord of Unknown, and to Beli, Emperor of the Sun. I thought on the times when the Beal fire blazed on this height, on the neighbouring promontory, on the cope-stone of Eryri, and on every high hill throughout Britain on the eve of the first of May. I thought on the day when the bands of Suetonius crossed the Menai strait in their broad-bottomed boats, fell upon the Druids and their followers, who with wild looks and brandished torches lined the shore, slew hundreds with merciless

butchery upon the plains, and pursued the remainder to the remotest fastnesses of the isle. I figured to myself long-bearded men with white vestments toiling up the rocks, followed by fierce warriors with glittering helms and short broad two-edged swords; I thought I heard groans, cries of rage, and the dull, awful sound of bodies precipitated down rocks. Then as I looked towards the sea I thought I saw the fleet of Gryffith ab Cynan steering from Ireland to Aber Menai, Gryffith the son of a fugitive king, born in Ireland in the Commot of Columbcille, Gryffith the frequently baffled, the often victorious; once a manacled prisoner sweating in the sun, in the market-place of Chester, eventually king of North Wales; Gryffith, who 'though he loved well the trumpet's clang loved the sound of the harp better'; who led on his warriors to twenty-four battles, and presided over the composition of the twenty-four measures of Cambrian song. Then I thought—— But I should tire the reader were I to detail all the intensely Welsh thoughts, which crowded into my head as I stood on the Cairn of the Grey Giant.

Satiated with looking about and thinking, I sprang from the cairn and rejoined my guide. We now descended the eastern side of the hill till we came to a singular-looking stone, which had much the appearance of a Druid's stone. I inquired of my guide whether there was any tale connected with this stone.

'None,' he replied; 'but I have heard people

say that it was a strange stone, and on that account I brought you to look at it.'

A little farther down he showed me part of a ruined wall.

'What name does this bear?' said I.

'Clawdd yr Afalon,' he replied. 'The dyke of the orchard.'

'A strange place for an orchard,' I replied. 'If there was ever an orchard on this bleak hill, the apples must have been very sour.'

Over rocks and stones we descended till we found ourselves on a road, not very far from the shore, on the south-east side of the hill.

'I am very thirsty,' said I, as I wiped the perspiration from my face; 'how I should like now to drink my fill of cool spring water.'

'If your honour is inclined for water,' said my guide, 'I can take you to the finest spring in all Wales.'

'Pray do so,' said I, 'for I really am dying of thirst.'

'It is on our way to the town,' said the lad, 'and is scarcely a hundred yards off.'

He then led me to the fountain. It was a little well under a stone wall, on the left side of the way. It might be about two feet deep, was fenced with rude stones, and had a bottom of sand.

'There,' said the lad, 'is the fountain. It is called the Fairies' Well, and contains the best water in Wales.'

I lay down and drank. O, what water was that of the Fairies' Well! I drank and drank, and thought I could never drink enough of that

delicious water; the lad all the time saying that I need not be afraid to drink, as the water of the Fairies' Well had never done harm to anybody. At length I got up, and standing by the fountain repeated the lines of a bard on a spring, not of a Welsh but a Gaelic bard, which are perhaps the finest lines ever composed on the theme. Yet MacIntyre, for such was his name, was like myself an admirer of good ale, to say nothing of whiskey, and loved to indulge in it at a proper time and place. But there is a time and place for everything, and sometimes the warmest admirer of ale would prefer the lymph of the hillside fountain to the choicest ale that ever foamed in tankard from the cellars of Holkham. Here are the lines, most faithfully rendered:—

> 'The wild wine of nature,
> Honey-like in its taste,
> The genial, fair, thin element
> Filtering through the sands,
> Which is sweeter than cinnamon,
> And is well known to us hunters.
> O, that eternal, healing draught,
> Which comes from under the earth,
> Which contains abundance of good
> And costs no money!'

Returning to the hotel I satisfied my guide and dined. After dinner I trifled agreeably with my brandy-and-water till it was near seven o'clock, when I paid my bill, thought of the waiter and did not forget Father Boots. I then took my departure, receiving and returning bows, and walking to the station got into a first-class carriage and soon found myself at Bangor.

CHAPTER XLIII

The Inn at Bangor—Port Dyn Norwig—Sea Serpent—Thoroughly Welsh Place—Blessing of Health.

I WENT to the same inn at Bangor at which I had been before. It was Saturday night and the house was thronged with people, who had arrived by train from Manchester and Liverpool, with the intention of passing the Sunday in the Welsh town. I took tea in an immense dining- or ball-room, which was, however, so crowded with guests that its walls literally sweated. Amidst the multitude I felt quite solitary—my beloved ones had departed for Llangollen, and there was no one with whom I could exchange a thought or a word of kindness. I addressed several individuals, and in every instance repented ; from some I got no answers, from others what was worse than no answers at all—in every countenance near me suspicion, brutality, or conceit was most legibly imprinted—I was not amongst Welsh, but the scum of manufacturing England.

Every bed in the house was engaged—the people of the house, however, provided me a bed at a place which they called the cottage, on the side of a hill in the outskirts of the town. There I passed the night comfortably enough. At about eight in the morning I arose, returned

to the inn, breakfasted, and departed for Beth Gelert by way of Caernarvon.

It was Sunday, and I had originally intended to pass the day at Bangor, and to attend divine service twice at the cathedral, but I found myself so very uncomfortable, owing to the crowd of interlopers, that I determined to proceed on my journey without delay; making up my mind, however, to enter the first church I should meet in which service was being performed; for it is really not good to travel on the Sunday without going into a place of worship.

The day was sunny and fiercely hot, as all the days had lately been. In about an hour I arrived at Port Dyn Norwig: it stood on the right side of the road. The name of this place, which I had heard from the coachman who drove my family and me to Caernarvon and Llanberis a few days before, had excited my curiosity with respect to it, as it signifies the port of the Norway man, so I now turned aside to examine it. 'No doubt,' said I to myself, 'the place derives its name from the piratical Danes and Norse having resorted to it in the old time.' Port Dyn Norwig seems to consist of a creek, a staithe, and about a hundred houses: a few small vessels were lying at the staithe. I stood about ten minutes upon it staring about, and then feeling rather oppressed by the heat of the sun, I bent my way to a small house which bore a sign, and from which a loud noise of voices proceeded. 'Have you good ale?' said I in English to a good-

looking buxom dame of about forty, whom I saw in the passage.

She looked at me but returned no answer.

'Oes genoch cwrw da?' said I.

'Oes!' she replied with a smile, and opening the door of a room on the left-hand bade me walk in.

I entered the room; six or seven men, seemingly sea-faring people, were seated drinking and talking vociferously in Welsh. Their conversation was about the sea serpent: some believed in the existence of such a thing, others did not—after a little time one said, 'Let us ask this gentleman for his opinion.'

'And what would be the use of asking him?' said another, 'we have only Cumraeg, and he has only Saesneg.'

'I have a little broken Cumraeg, at the service of this good company,' said I. 'With respect to the snake of the sea I beg leave to say that I believe in the existence of such a creature; and am surprised that any people in these parts should not believe in it: why, the sea serpent has been seen in these parts.'

'When was that, Gwr Boneddig?' said one of the company.

'About fifty years ago,' said I. 'Once in October, in the year 1805, as a small vessel of the Traeth was upon the Menai, sailing very slowly, the weather being very calm, the people on board saw a strange creature like an immense worm swimming after them. It soon overtook them, climbed on board through the tiller-hole,

and coiled itself on the deck under the mast—the people at first were dreadfully frightened, but taking courage they attacked it with an oar and drove it overboard; it followed the vessel for some time, but a breeze springing up they lost sight of it.'

'And how did you learn this?' said the last who had addressed me.

'I read the story,' said I, 'in a pure Welsh book called the "Greal."'

'I now remember hearing the same thing,' said an old man, 'when I was a boy; it had slipt out of my memory, but now I remember all about it. The ship was called the *Robert Ellis*. Are you of these parts, gentleman?'

'No,' said I, 'I am not of these parts.'

'Then you are of South Wales—indeed your Welsh is very different from ours.'

'I am not of South Wales,' said I, 'I am of the seed not of the sea-snake but of the coiling serpent, for so one of the old Welsh poets called the Saxons.'

'But how did you learn Welsh?' said the old man.

'I learned it by the grammar,' said I, 'a long time ago.'

'Ah, you learnt it by the grammar,' said the old man; 'that accounts for your Welsh being different from ours. We did not learn our Welsh by the grammar—your Welsh is different from ours, and of course better, being the Welsh of the grammar. Ah, it is a fine thing to be a grammarian.'

'Yes, it is a fine thing to be a grammarian,' cried the rest of the company, and I observed that everybody now regarded me with a kind of respect.

A jug of ale which the hostess had brought me had been standing before me some time. I now tasted it and found it very good. Whilst dispatching it, I asked various questions about the old Danes, the reason why the place was called the port of the Norwegian, and about its trade. The good folks knew nothing about the old Danes, and as little as to the reason of its being called the port of the Norwegian—but they said that besides that name it bore that of Melin Heli, or the mill of the salt pool, and that slates were exported from thence, which came from quarries close by.

Having finished my ale, I bade the company adieu and quitted Port Dyn Norwig, one of the most thoroughly Welsh places I had seen, for during the whole time I was in it, I heard no words of English uttered, except the two or three spoken by myself. In about an hour I reached Caernarvon.

The road from Bangor to Caernarvon is very good, and the scenery interesting—fine hills border it on the left, or south-east, and on the right at some distance is the Menai with Anglesey beyond it. Not far from Caernarvon a sandbank commences, extending for miles up the Menai, towards Bangor, and dividing the strait into two.

I went to the Castle Inn, which fronts the

square or market-place, and being shown into a room ordered some brandy-and-water, and sat down. Two young men were seated in the room. I spoke to them and received civil answers, at which I was rather astonished, as I found by the tone of their voices that they were English. The air of one was far superior to that of the other, and with him I was soon in conversation. In the course of discourse he informed me that being a martyr to ill-health he had come from London to Wales, hoping that change of air, and exercise on the Welsh hills, would afford him relief, and that his friend had been kind enough to accompany him. That he had been about three weeks in Wales, had taken all the exercise that he could, but that he was still very unwell, slept little and had no appetite. I told him not to be discouraged, but to proceed in the course which he had adopted till the end of the summer, by which time I thought it very probable that he would be restored to his health, as he was still young. At these words of mine a beam of hope brightened his countenance, and he said that he had no other wish than to regain his health, and that if he did he should be the happiest of men. The intense wish of the poor young man for health caused me to think how insensible I had hitherto been to the possession of the greatest of all terrestrial blessings. I had always had the health of an elephant, but I never remembered to have been sensible to the magnitude of the blessing or in the slightest degree grateful to the God who

gave it. I shuddered to think how I should feel if suddenly deprived of my health. Far worse, no doubt, than that poor invalid. He was young, and in youth there is hope—but I was no longer young. At last, however, I thought that if God took away my health He might so far alter my mind that I might be happy even without health, or the prospect of it; and that reflection made me quite comfortable.

CHAPTER XLIV

National School—The Young Preacher—Pont Bettws—Spanish Words—Two Tongues, Two Faces—The Elephant's Snout—Llyn Cwellyn—The Snowdon Ranger—My House—Castell y Cidwm—Descent to Bethgelert.

It might be about three o'clock in the afternoon when I left Caernarvon for Beth Gelert, distant about thirteen miles. I journeyed through a beautiful country of hill and dale, woods and meadows, the whole gilded by abundance of sunshine. After walking about an hour without intermission I reached a village, and asked a man the name of it.'

'Llan—— something,' he replied.

As he was standing before a long building, through the open door of which a sound proceeded like that of preaching, I asked him what place it was, and what was going on in it, and received for answer that it was the National School, and that there was a clergyman preaching in it. I then asked if the clergyman was of the Church, and on learning that he was, I forthwith entered the building, where in one end of a long room I saw a young man in a white surplice preaching from a desk to about thirty or forty people, who were seated on benches before him. I sat down and listened. The young man preached with great zeal and fluency. The sermon was a very seasonable one, being about

the harvest, and in it things temporal and spiritual were very happily blended. The part of the sermon which I heard—I regretted that I did not hear the whole—lasted about five-and-twenty minutes: a hymn followed, and then the congregation broke up. I inquired the name of the young man who preached, and was told that it was Edwards, and that he came from Caernarvon. The name of the incumbent of the parish was Thomas.

Leaving the village of the harvest sermon I proceeded on my way which lay to the south-east. I was now drawing nigh to the mountainous district of Eryri—a noble hill called Mount Eilio appeared before me to the north; an immense mountain called Pen Drws Coed lay over against it on the south, just like a couchant elephant with its head lower than the top of its back. After a time I entered a most beautiful sunny valley, and presently came to a bridge over a pleasant stream running in the direction of the south. As I stood upon that bridge I almost fancied myself in Paradise; everything looked so beautiful or grand—green, sunny meadows lay all around me, intersected by the brook, the waters of which ran with tinkling laughter over a shingly bottom. Noble Eilio to the north; enormous Pen Drws Coed to the south; a tall mountain far beyond them to the east. 'I never was in such a lovely spot!' I cried to myself in a perfect rapture. 'O, how glad I should be to learn the name of this bridge, standing on which I have had "heaven opened

to me," as my old friends the Spaniards used to say.' Scarcely had I said these words when I observed a man and a woman coming towards the bridge from the direction in which I was bound. I hastened to meet them in the hope of obtaining information, they were both rather young and were probably a couple of sweethearts taking a walk or returning from meeting. The woman was a few steps in advance of the man; seeing that I was about to address her, she averted her head and quickened her steps, and before I had completed the question, which I put to her in Welsh, she had bolted past me screaming 'Ah Dim Saesneg,' and was several yards distant.

I then addressed myself to the man who had stopped, asking him the name of the bridge.

'Pont Bettws,' he replied.

'And what may be the name of the river?' said I.

'Afon—— something,' said he.

And on my thanking him he went forward to the woman who was waiting for him by the bridge.

'Is that man Welsh or English?' I heard her say when he had rejoined her.

'I don't know,' said the man—'he was civil enough; why were you such a fool?'

'O, I thought he would speak to me in English,' said the woman, 'and the thought of that horrid English puts me into such a flutter; you know I can't speak a word of it.'

They proceeded on their way and I proceeded on mine, and presently coming to a little inn on

the left side of the way, at the entrance of a village, I went in.

A respectable-looking man and woman were seated at tea at a table in a nice clean kitchen. I sat down on a chair near the table, and called for ale—the ale was brought me in a jug—I drank some, put the jug on the table, and began to discourse with the people in Welsh—a handsome dog was seated on the ground; suddenly it laid one of its paws on its master's knee.

'Down, Perro,' said he.

'Perro!' said I; 'why do you call the dog Perro?'

'We call him Perro,' said the man, 'because his name is Perro.'

'But how came you to give him that name?' said I.

'We did not give it to him,' said the man—'he bore that name when he came into our hands; a farmer gave him to us when he was very young, and told us his name was Perro.'

'And how came the farmer to call him Perro?' said I.

'I don't know,' said the man—'why do you ask?'

'Perro,' said I, 'is a Spanish word, and signifies a dog in general. I am rather surprised that a dog in the mountains of Wales should be called by the Spanish word for dog.' I fell into a fit of musing. 'How Spanish words are diffused! Wherever you go you will find some Spanish word or other in use. I have heard Spanish

words used by Russian mujiks, and Turkish fig-gatherers—I have this day heard a Spanish word in the mountains of Wales, and I have no doubt that were I to go to Iceland I should find Spanish words used there. How can I doubt it? when I reflect that more than six hundred years ago, one of the words to denote a bad woman was Spanish. In the oldest of Icelandic domestic sagas, Skarphedin, the son of Nial the seer, called Hallgerdr, widow of Gunnar, a puta—and that word so maddened Hallgerdr that she never rested till she had brought about his destruction. Now, why this preference everywhere for Spanish words over those of every other language? I never heard French words or German words used by Russian mujiks and Turkish fig-gatherers. I question whether I should find any in Iceland forming part of the vernacular. I certainly never found a French or even a German word in an old Icelandic saga. Why this partiality everywhere for Spanish words? the question is puzzling; at any rate it puts me out——'

'Yes, it puts me out!' I exclaimed aloud, striking my fist on the table with a vehemence which caused the good folks to start half up from their seats—before they could say anything, however, a vehicle drove up to the door, and a man getting out came into the room. He had a glazed hat on his head, and was dressed something like the guard of a mail. He touched his hat to me, and called for a glass of whiskey. I gave him the sele of the evening and entered

into conversation with him in English. In the course of discourse I learned that he was the postman, and was going his rounds in his cart—he was more than respectful to me, he was fawning and sycophantic. The whiskey was brought and he stood with the glass in his hand. Suddenly he began speaking Welsh to the people; before, however, he had uttered two sentences the woman lifted her hand with an alarmed air, crying 'Hush! he understands.' The fellow was turning me to ridicule. I flung my head back, closed my eyes, opened my mouth and laughed aloud. The fellow stood aghast; his hand trembled, and he spilt the greater part of the whiskey upon the ground. At the end of about half a minute I got up, asked what I had to pay, and on being told twopence, I put down the money. Then going up to the man I put my right forefinger very near to his nose, and said 'Dwy o iaith dwy o wyneb, two languages, two faces, friend!'—Then after leering at him for a moment I wished the people of the house good evening and departed.

Walking rapidly on towards the east I soon drew near the termination of the valley. The valley terminates in a deep gorge or pass between Mount Eilio—which, by the bye, is part of the chine of Snowdon—and Pen Drws Coed. The latter, that couchant elephant with its head turned to the north-east, seems as if it wished to bar the pass with its trunk; by its trunk I mean a kind of jaggy ridge which descends down to the road. I entered the gorge, passing

near a little waterfall which with much noise runs down the precipitous side of Mount Eilio—presently I came to a little mill by the side of a brook running towards the east. I asked the miller-woman who was standing near the mill, with her head turned towards the setting sun, the name of the mill and the stream. 'The mill is called "The mill of the river of Lake Cwellyn,"' said she, 'and the river is called the river of Lake Cwellyn.'

'And who owns the land?' said I.

'Sir Richard,' said she. 'I Sir Richard yw yn perthyn y tîr. Mr. Williams, however, possesses some part of Mount Eilio.'

'And who is Mr. Williams?' said I.

'Who is Mr. Williams?' said the miller's wife. 'Ho, ho! what a stranger you must be to ask me who is Mr. Williams.'

I smiled and passed on. The mill was below the level of the road, and its wheel was turned by the water of a little conduit supplied by the brook at some distance above the mill. I had observed similar conduits employed for similar purposes in Cornwall. A little below the mill was a weir, and a little below the weir the river ran frothing past the extreme end of the elephant's snout. Following the course of the river I at last emerged with it from the pass into a valley surrounded by enormous mountains. Extending along it from west to east, and occupying its entire southern part, lay an oblong piece of water, into which the streamlet of the pass discharged itself. This was one of the many beautiful

lakes, which a few days before I had seen from the Wyddfa. As for the Wyddfa, I now beheld it high above me in the north-east, looking very grand indeed, shining like a silver helmet whilst catching the glories of the setting sun.

I proceeded slowly along the road, the lake below me on my right hand, whilst the shelvy side of Snowdon rose above me on the left. The evening was calm and still, and no noise came upon my ear save the sound of a cascade falling into the lake from a black mountain, which frowned above it on the south, and cast a gloomy shadow far over it.

This cataract was in the neighbourhood of a singular-looking rock, projecting above the lake from the mountain's side. I wandered a considerable way without meeting or seeing a single human being. At last when I had nearly gained the eastern end of the valley I saw two men seated on the side of the hill, on the verge of the road, in the vicinity of a house which stood a little way up the hill. The lake here was much wider than I had hitherto seen it, for the huge mountain on the south had terminated and the lake expanded considerably in that quarter, having instead of the black mountain a beautiful hill beyond it.

I quickened my steps and soon came up to the two individuals. One was an elderly man, dressed in a smock frock and with a hairy cap on his head. The other was much younger, wore a hat, and was dressed in a coarse suit of blue nearly new, and doubtless his Sunday's best.

He was smoking a pipe. I greeted them in English and sat down near them. They responded in the same language, the younger man with considerable civility and briskness, the other in a tone of voice denoting some reserve.

'May I ask the name of this lake?' said I, addressing myself to the young man who sat between me and the elderly one.

'Its name is Llyn Cwellyn, sir,' said he, taking the pipe out of his mouth. 'And a fine lake it is.'

'Plenty of fish in it?' I demanded.

'Plenty, sir; plenty of trout and pike and char.'

'Is it deep?' said I.

'Near the shore it is shallow, sir, but in the middle and near the other side it is deep, so deep that no one knows how deep it is.'

'What is the name,' said I, 'of the great black mountain there on the other side?'

'It is called Mynydd Mawr or the Great Mountain. Yonder rock, which bulks out from it, down the lake yonder, and which you passed as you came along, is called Castell Cidwm, which means Wolf's Rock or Castle.'

'Did a wolf ever live there?' I demanded.

'Perhaps so,' said the man, 'for I have heard say that there were wolves of old in Wales.'

'And what is the name of the beautiful hill yonder, before us across the water?'

'That, sir, is called Cairn Drws y Coed,' said the man.

'The stone heap of the gate of the wood,' said I.

'Are you Welsh, sir?' said the man.

'No,' said I, 'but I know something of the language of Wales. I suppose you live in that house?'

'Not exactly, sir, my father-in-law here lives in that house, and my wife with him. I am a miner, and spend six days in the week at my mine, but every Sunday I come here and pass the day with my wife and him.'

'And what profession does he follow?' said I; 'is he a fisherman?'

'Fisherman!' said the elderly man contemptuously, 'not I. I am the Snowdon Ranger.'

'And what is that?' said I.

The elderly man tossed his head proudly, and made no reply.

'A ranger means a guide, sir,' said the younger man—'my father-in-law is generally termed the Snowdon Ranger because he is a tip-top guide, and he has named the house after him, the Snowdon Ranger. He entertains gentlemen in it who put themselves under his guidance in order to ascend Snowdon and to see the country.'

'There is some difference in your professions,' said I; 'he deals in heights, you in depths, both, however, are break-necky trades.'

'I run more risk from gunpowder than anything else,' said the younger man. 'I am a slate-miner and am continually blasting. I have, however, had my falls. Are you going far to-night, sir?'

'I am going to Bethgelert,' said I.

'A good six miles, sir, from here. Do you come from Caernarvon?'

'Farther than that,' said I. 'I come from Bangor.'

'To-day, sir, and walking?'

'To-day, and walking.'

'You must be rather tired, sir, you came along the valley very slowly.'

'I am not in the slightest degree tired,' said I; 'when I start from here, I shall put on my best pace and soon get to Bethgelert.'

'Anybody can get along over level ground,' said the old man laconically.

'Not with equal swiftness,' said I. 'I do assure you, friend, to be able to move at a good swinging pace over level ground is something not to be sneezed at. Not,' said I, lifting up my voice, 'that I would for a moment compare walking on the level ground to mountain ranging, pacing along the road to springing up crags like a mountain goat, or assert that even Powell himself, the first of all road walkers, was entitled to so bright a wreath of fame as the Snowdon Ranger.'

'Won't you walk in, sir?' said the elderly man.

'No, I thank you,' said I, 'I prefer sitting out here gazing on the lake and the noble mountains.'

'I wish you would, sir,' said the elderly man, 'and take a glass of something; I will charge you nothing.'

'Thank you,' said I—'I am in want of nothing, and shall presently start. Do many people ascend Snowdon from your house?'

'Not so many as I could wish,' said the ranger; 'people in general prefer ascending Snowdon from that trumpery place Bethgelert; but those who do are fools—begging your honour's pardon. The place to ascend Snowdon from is my house. The way from my house up Snowdon is wonderful for the romantic scenery which it affords; that from Bethgelert can't be named in the same day with it for scenery; moreover, from my house you may have the best guide in Wales; whereas the guides of Bethgelert—but I say nothing. If your honour is bound for the Wyddfa, as I suppose you are, you had better start from my house to-morrow under my guidance.'

'I have already been up the Wyddfa from Llanberis,' said I, 'and am now going through Bethgelert to Llangollen, where my family are; were I going up Snowdon again I should most certainly start from your house under your guidance, and were I not in a hurry at present, I would certainly take up my quarters here for a week, and every day make excursions with you into the recesses of Eryri. I suppose you are acquainted with all the secrets of the hills?'

'Trust the old ranger for that, your honour. I would show your honour the black lake in the frightful hollow in which the fishes have monstrous heads and little bodies, the lake on which neither swan, duck, nor any kind of wildfowl was ever seen to light. Then I would show your honour the fountain of the hopping creatures, where, where——'

'Were you ever at that Wolf's Crag, that Castell y Cidwm?' said I.

'Can't say I ever was, your honour. You see it lies so close by, just across the lake, that——'

'You thought you could see it any day, and so never went,' said I. 'Can you tell me whether there are any ruins upon it?'

'I can't, your honour.'

'I shouldn't wonder,' said I, 'if in old times it was the stronghold of some robber-chieftain; cidwm in the old Welsh is frequently applied to a ferocious man. Castell Cidwm, I should think, rather ought to be translated the robber's castle than the wolf's rock. If I ever come into these parts again you and I will visit it together, and see what kind of place it is. Now farewell! It is getting late.' I then departed.

'What a nice gentleman!' said the younger man, when I was a few yards distant.

'I never saw a nicer gentleman,' said the old ranger.

I sped along, Snowdon on my left, the lake on my right, and the tip of a mountain peak right before me in the east. After a little time I looked back; what a scene! The silver lake and the shadowy mountain over its southern side looking now, methought, very much like Gibraltar. I lingered and lingered, gazing and gazing, and at last only by an effort tore myself away. The evening had now become delightfully cool in this land of wonders. On I sped, passing by two noisy brooks coming from Snowdon to pay tribute to the lake. And now

I had left the lake and the valley behind, and was ascending a hill. As I gained its summit, up rose the moon to cheer my way. In a little time, a wild stony gorge confronted me, a stream ran down the gorge with hollow roar, a bridge lay across it. I asked a figure whom I saw standing by the bridge the place's name. 'Rhyd du'—the black ford—I crossed the bridge. The voice of the Methodist was yelling from a little chapel on my left. I went to the door and listened: 'When the sinner takes hold of God, God takes hold of the sinner.' The voice was frightfully hoarse. I passed on: night fell fast around me, and the mountain to the south-east, towards which I was tending, looked blackly grand. And now I came to a milestone on which I read with difficulty: 'Three miles to Bethgelert.' The way for some time had been upward, but now it was downward. I reached a torrent, which coming from the north-west rushed under a bridge, over which I passed. The torrent attended me on my right hand the whole way to Bethgelert. The descent now became very rapid. I passed a pine wood on my left, and proceeded for more than two miles at a tremendous rate. I then came to a wood—this wood was just above Bethgelert—proceeding in the direction of a black mountain, I found myself amongst houses, at the bottom of a valley. I passed over a bridge, and inquiring of some people whom I met, the way to the inn, was shown an edifice brilliantly lighted up, which I entered.

CHAPTER XLV

Inn at Bethgelert—Delectable Company—Lieutenant P——.

The inn or hotel at Bethgelert was a large and commodious building, and was anything but thronged with company; what company, however, there was, was disagreeable enough, perhaps more so than that in which I had been the preceding evening, which was composed of the scum of Manchester and Liverpool; the company amongst which I now was, consisted of some seven or eight individuals, two of them were military puppies, one a tallish fellow, who though evidently upwards of thirty, affected the airs of a languishing girl, and would fain have made people believe that he was dying of ennui and lassitude. The other was a short, spuddy fellow, with a broad ugly face, and with spectacles on his nose, who talked very consequentially about 'the service' and all that, but whose tone of voice was coarse and his manner that of an under-bred person; then there was an old fellow about sixty-five, a civilian, with a red carbuncled face; he was father of the spuddy military puppy, on whom he occasionally cast eyes of pride and almost adoration, and whose sayings he much applauded, especially certain *doubles entendres*, to call them by no harsher term, directed to a fat

girl, weighing some fifteen stone, who officiated in the coffee-room as waiter. Then there was a creature to do justice to whose appearance would require the pencil of a Hogarth. He was about five feet three inches and a quarter high, and might have weighed, always provided a stone weight had been attached to him, about half as much as the fat girl. His countenance was cadaverous and was eternally agitated by something between a grin and a simper. He was dressed in a style of superfine gentility, and his skeleton fingers were bedizened with tawdry rings. His conversation was chiefly about his bile and his secretions, the efficacy of licorice in producing a certain effect, and the expediency of changing one's linen at least three times a day; though had he changed his six, I should have said that the purification of the last shirt would have been no sinecure to the laundress. His accent was decidedly Scotch: he spoke familiarly of Scott and one or two other Scotch worthies, and more than once insinuated that he was a member of Parliament. With respect to the rest of the company I say nothing, and for the very sufficient reason that, unlike the above described batch, they did not seem disposed to be impertinent towards me.

Eager to get out of such society I retired early to bed. As I left the room the diminutive Scotch individual was describing to the old simpleton, who on the ground of the other's being a 'member' was listening to him with extreme attention, how he was labouring under an access

of bile owing to his having left his licorice somewhere or other. I passed a quiet night, and in the morning breakfasted, paid my bill, and departed. As I went out of the coffee-room the spuddy, broad-faced military puppy with spectacles was vociferating to the languishing military puppy, and to his old simpleton of a father, who was listening to him with his usual look of undisguised admiration, about the absolute necessity of kicking Lieutenant P—— out of the army for having disgraced 'the service.' Poor P——, whose only crime was trying to defend himself with fist and candlestick from the manual attacks of his brutal messmates.

CHAPTER XLVI

The Valley of Gelert—Legend of the Dog—Magnificent Scenery—The Knicht—Goats in Wales—The Frightful Crag—Temperance House—Smile and Curtsey.

BETHGELERT is situated in a valley surrounded by huge hills, the most remarkable of which are Moel Hebog and Cerrig Llan; the former fences it on the south, and the latter, which is quite black and nearly perpendicular, on the east. A small stream rushes through the valley, and sallies forth by a pass at its south-eastern end. The valley is said by some to derive its name of Beddgelert, which signifies the grave of Celert, from being the burial-place of Celert a British saint of the sixth century, to whom Llangeler in Carmarthenshire is believed to have been consecrated, but the popular and most universally received tradition is that it has its name from being the resting-place of a faithful dog called Celert or Gelert, killed by his master, the warlike and celebrated Llywelyn ab Iorwerth, from an unlucky misapprehension. Though the legend is known to most people, I shall take the liberty of relating it.

Llywelyn during his contests with the English had encamped with a few followers in the valley, and one day departed with his men on an expedition, leaving his infant son in a cradle in his tent, under the care of his hound Gelert, after

giving the child its fill of goat's milk. Whilst he was absent a wolf from the neighbouring mountains, in quest of prey, found its way into the tent, and was about to devour the child, when the watchful dog interfered, and after a desperate conflict, in which the tent was torn down, succeeded in destroying the monster. Llywelyn returning at evening found the tent on the ground, and the dog, covered with blood, sitting beside it. Imagining that the blood with which Gelert was besmeared was that of his own son devoured by the animal, to whose care he had confided him, Llywelyn in a paroxysm of natural indignation forthwith transfixed the faithful creature with his spear. Scarcely, however, had he done so when his ears were startled by the cry of a child from beneath the fallen tent, and hastily removing the canvas he found the child in its cradle, quite uninjured, and the body of an enormous wolf frightfully torn and mangled lying near. His breast was now filled with conflicting emotions, joy for the preservation of his son, and grief for the fate of his dog, to whom he forthwith hastened. The poor animal was not quite dead, but presently expired, in the act of licking his master's hand. Llywelyn mourned over him as over a brother, buried him with funeral honours in the valley, and erected a tomb over him as over a hero. From that time the valley was called Bethgelert.

Such is the legend, which, whether true or fictitious, is singularly beautiful and affecting.

The tomb, or what is said to be the tomb, of

Gelert, stands in a beautiful meadow just below the precipitous side of Cerrig Llan: it consists of a large slab lying on its side, and two upright stones. It is shaded by a weeping willow, and is surrounded by a hexagonal paling. Who is there acquainted with the legend, whether he believes that the dog lies beneath those stones or not, can visit them without exclaiming with a sigh, 'Poor Gelert!'

After wandering about the valley for some time, and seeing a few of its wonders, I inquired my way for Festiniog, and set off for that place. The way to it is through the pass at the south-east end of the valley. Arrived at the entrance of the pass I turned round to look at the scenery I was leaving behind me; the view which presented itself to my eyes was very grand and beautiful. Before me lay the meadow of Gelert, with the river flowing through it towards the pass. Beyond the meadow the Snowdon range; on the right the mighty Cerrig Llan; on the left the equally mighty, but not quite so precipitous, Hebog. Truly, the valley of Gelert is a wondrous valley—rivalling for grandeur and beauty any vale either in the Alps or Pyrenees. After a long and earnest view I turned round again and proceeded on my way.

Presently I came to a bridge bestriding the stream, which a man told me was called Pont Aber Glâs Lyn, or the bridge of the debouchement of the grey lake. I soon emerged from the pass, and after proceeding some way stopped again to admire the scenery. To the west was

the Wyddfa; full north was a stupendous range of rocks; behind them a conical peak seemingly rivalling the Wyddfa itself in altitude; between the rocks and the road, where I stood, was beautiful forest scenery. I again went on, going round the side of a hill by a gentle ascent. After a little time I again stopped to look about me. There was the rich forest scenery to the north, behind it were the rocks and behind the rocks rose the wonderful conical hill impaling heaven; confronting it to the south-east, was a huge lumpish hill. As I stood looking about me I saw a man coming across a field which sloped down to the road from a small house. He presently reached me, stopped and smiled. A more open countenance than his I never saw in all the days of my life.

'Dydd dachwi, sir,' said the man of the open countenance, 'the weather is very showy.'

'Very showy, indeed,' said I; 'I was just now wishing for somebody, of whom I might ask a question or two.'

'Perhaps I can answer those questions, sir?'

'Perhaps you can. What is the name of that wonderful peak sticking up behind the rocks to the north?'

'Many people have asked that question, sir, and I have given them the answer which I now give you. It is called the "Knicht," sir; and a wondrous hill it is.'

'And what is the name of yonder hill opposite to it, to the south, rising like one big lump.'

'I do not know the name of that hill, sir,

farther than that I have heard it called the Great Hill.'

'And a very good name for it,' said I; 'do you live in that house?'

'I do, sir, when I am at home.'

'And what occupation do you follow?'

'I am a farmer, though a small one.'

'Is your farm your own?'

'It is not, sir: I am not so far rich.'

'Who is your landlord?'

'Mr. Blicklin, sir. He is my landlord.'

'Is he a good landlord?'

'Very good, sir, no one can wish for a better landlord.'

'Has he a wife?'

'In truth, sir, he has; and a very good wife she is.'

'Has he children?'

'Plenty, sir; and very fine children they are.'

'Is he Welsh?'

'He is, sir! Cumro pur iawn.'

'Farewell,' said I; 'I shall never forget you; you are the first tenant I ever heard speak well of his landlord, or any one connected with him.'

'Then you have not spoken to the other tenants of Mr. Blicklin, sir. Every tenant of Mr. Blicklin would say the same of him as I have said, and of his wife and his children too. Good day, sir!'

I wended on my way; the sun was very powerful; saw cattle in a pool on my right, maddened with heat and flies, splashing and fighting. Presently I found myself with ex-

tensive meadows on my right and a wall of rocks on my left, on a lofty bank below which I saw goats feeding; beautiful creatures they were, white and black, with long silky hair, and long upright horns. They were of large size, and very different in appearance from the common race. These were the first goats which I had seen in Wales; for Wales is not at present the land of goats, whatever it may have been.

I passed under a crag exceedingly lofty and of very frightful appearance. It hung menacingly over the road. With this crag the wall of rocks terminated; beyond it lay an extensive strath, meadow, or marsh bounded on the east by a lofty hill. The road lay across the marsh. I went forward, crossed a bridge over a beautiful streamlet, and soon arrived at the foot of the hill. The road now took a turn to the right, that is to the south, and seemed to lead round the hill. Just at the turn of the road stood a small neat cottage. There was a board over the door with an inscription. I drew nigh and looked at it, expecting that it would tell me that good ale was sold within, and read: 'Tea made here, the draught which cheers but not inebriates'; I was before what is generally termed a temperance house.

'The bill of fare does not tempt you, sir,' said a woman who made her appearance at the door, just as I was about to turn away with an exceedingly wry face.

'It does not,' said I, 'and you ought to be ashamed of yourself to have nothing better to

offer to a traveller than a cup of tea. I am faint; and I want good ale to give me heart, not wishy-washy tea to take away the little strength I have.'

'What would you have me do, sir? Glad should I be to have a cup of ale to offer you, but the magistrates, when I applied to them for a licence, refused me one; so I am compelled to make a cup of tea, in order to get a crust of bread. And if you choose to step in I will make you a cup of tea, not wishy-washy, I assure you, but as good as ever was brewed.'

'I had tea for my breakfast at Bethgelert,' said I, 'and want no more till to-morrow morning. What 's the name of that strange-looking crag across the valley?'

'We call it Craig yr hyll ddrem, sir; which means—— I don't know what it means in English.'

'Does it mean the crag of the frightful look?'

'It does, sir,' said the woman; 'ah, I see you understand Welsh. Sometimes it 's called Allt Traeth.'

'The high place of the sandy channel,' said I, 'did the sea ever come up here?'

'I can't say, sir; perhaps it did; who knows?'

'I shouldn't wonder,' said I, 'if there was once an arm of the sea between that crag and this hill. Thank you! Farewell.'

'Then you won't walk in, sir?'

'Not to drink tea,' said I, 'tea is a good thing at a proper time, but were I to drink it now, it would make me ill.'

'Pray, sir, walk in,' said the woman, 'and perhaps I can accommodate you.'

'Then you have ale?' said I.

'No, sir; not a drop, but perhaps I can set something before you which you will like as well.'

'That I question,' said I, 'however, I will walk in.'

The woman conducted me into a nice little parlour, and, leaving me, presently returned with a bottle and tumbler on a tray.

'Here, sir,' said she, 'is something, which though not ale, I hope you will be able to drink.'

'What is it?' said I.

'It is ——, sir; and better never was drunk.'

I tasted it; it was terribly strong. Those who wish for either whiskey or brandy far above proof should always go to a temperance house.

I told the woman to bring me some water, and she brought me a jug of water, cold from the spring. With a little of the contents of the bottle, and a deal of the contents of the jug, I made myself a beverage tolerable enough; a poor substitute, however, to a genuine Englishman for his proper drink, the liquor which, according to the Edda, is called by men ale, and by the gods, beer.

I asked the woman whether she could read; she told me that she could, both Welsh and English; she likewise informed me that she had several books in both languages. I begged her to show me some, whereupon she brought me some half dozen, and placing them on the table left me to myself. Amongst the books was a volume of poems in Welsh, written by Robert

Williams of Betws Fawr, styled in poetic language, Gwilym Du O Eifion. The poems were chiefly on religious subjects. The following lines which I copied from 'Pethau a wnaed mewn Gardd,' or things written in a garden, appeared to me singularly beautiful :—

'Mewn gardd y cafodd dyn ei dwyllo ;
Mewn gardd y rhoed addewid iddo ;
Mewn gardd bradychwyd Iesu hawddgar ;
Mewn gardd amdowyd ef mewn daeār.

'In a garden the first of our race was deceived ;
In a garden the promise of grace he received ;
In a garden was Jesus betray'd to His doom ;
In a garden His body was laid in the tomb.'

Having finished my glass of 'summut' and my translation, I called to the woman and asked her what I had to pay.

'Nothing,' said she, 'if you had had a cup of tea I should have charged sixpence.'

'You make no charge,' said I, 'for what I have had ?'

'Nothing, sir, nothing.'

'But suppose,' said I, 'I were to give you something by way of present, would you——' and here I stopped.

The woman smiled.

'Would you fling it in my face ?' said I.

'O dear, no, sir,' said the woman, smiling more than before.

I gave her something—it was not a sixpence—at which she not only smiled but curtseyed ; then bidding her farewell I went out of the door.

I was about to take the broad road, which led

round the hill, when she inquired of me where I was going, and on my telling her to Festiniog, she advised me to go by a by-road behind the house which led over the hill.

'If you do, sir,' said she, 'you will see some of the finest prospects in Wales, get into the high road again, and save a mile and a half of way.'

I told the temperance woman I would follow her advice, whereupon she led me behind the house, pointed to a rugged path, which with a considerable ascent seemed to lead towards the north, and after giving certain directions, not very intelligible, returned to her temperance temple.

CHAPTER XLVII

Spanish Proverb—The Short Cut—Predestination—Rhys Goch—Old Crusty—Undercharging—The Cavalier.

THE Spaniards have a proverb: 'No hay atajo sin trabajo,' there is no short cut without a deal of labour. This proverb is very true, as I know by my own experience, for I never took a short cut in my life, and I have taken many in my wanderings, without falling down, getting into a slough, or losing my way. On the present occasion I lost my way, and wandered about for nearly two hours amidst rocks, thickets, and precipices, without being able to find it. The temperance woman, however, spoke nothing but the truth, when she said I should see some fine scenery. From a rock I obtained a wonderful view of the Wyddfa towering in sublime grandeur in the west, and of the beautiful, but spectral, Knicht shooting up high in the north; and from the top of a bare hill I obtained a prospect to the south, noble indeed—waters, forests, hoary mountains, and in the far distance the sea. But all these fine prospects were a poor compensation for what I underwent: I was scorched by the sun, which was insufferably hot, and my feet were bleeding from the sharp points of the rocks which cut through my boots like razors. At length coming to a stone wall I flung myself

down under it, and almost thought that I should give up the ghost. After some time, however, I recovered, and getting up tried to find my way out of the anialwch. Sheer good fortune caused me to stumble upon a path, by following which I came to a lone farm-house, where a good-natured woman gave me certain directions by means of which I at last got out of the hot, stony wilderness, for such it was, upon a smooth royal road.

'Trust me again taking any short cuts,' said I, 'after the specimen I have just had.' This, however, I had frequently said before, and have said since after taking short cuts—and probably shall often say again before I come to my great journey's end.

I turned to the east which I knew to be my proper direction, and being now on smooth ground put my legs to their best speed. The road by a rapid descent conducted me to a beautiful valley with a small town at its southern end. I soon reached the town, and on inquiring its name found I was in Tan y Bwlch, which interpreted signifieth 'Below the Pass.' Feeling much exhausted I entered the Grapes Inn.

On my calling for brandy and water I was shown into a handsome parlour. The brandy and water soon restored the vigour which I had lost in the wilderness. In the parlour was a serious-looking gentleman with a glass of something before him. With him, as I sipped my brandy and water, I got into discourse. The discourse soon took a religious turn, and terminated in a dispute. He told me he believed

in divine predestination; I told him I did not, but that I believed in divine prescience. He asked me whether I hoped to be saved; I told him I did, and asked him whether he hoped to be saved. He told me he did not, and as he said so, he tapped with a silver tea-spoon on the rim of his glass. I said that he seemed to take very coolly the prospect of damnation; he replied that it was of no use taking what was inevitable otherwise than coolly. I asked him on what ground he imagined he should be lost; he replied on the ground of being predestined to be lost. I asked him how he knew he was predestined to be lost; whereupon he asked me how I knew I was to be saved; I told him I did not know I was to be saved, but trusted I should be so by belief in Christ, who came into the world to save sinners, and that if he believed in Christ he might be as easily saved as myself, or any other sinner who believed in Him. Our dispute continued a considerable time longer; at last, finding him silent, and having finished my brandy and water, I got up, rang the bell, paid for what I had had, and left him looking very miserable, perhaps at finding that he was not quite so certain of eternal damnation as he had hitherto supposed. There can be no doubt that the idea of damnation is anything but disagreeable to some people; it gives them a kind of gloomy consequence in their own eyes. We must be something particular they think, or God would hardly deem it worth His while to torment us for ever.

I inquired the way to Festiniog, and finding that

I had passed by it on my way to the town, I went back, and as directed turned to the east up a wide pass, down which flowed a river. I soon found myself in another and very noble valley intersected by the river which was fed by numerous streams rolling down the sides of the hills. The road which I followed in the direction of the east, lay on the southern side of the valley and led upward by a steep ascent. On I went, a mighty hill close on my right. My mind was full of enthusiastic fancies; I was approaching Festiniog the birthplace of Rhys Goch, who styled himself Rhys Goch of Eryri or Red Rhys of Snowdon, a celebrated bard, and a partisan of Owen Glendower, who lived to an immense age, and who, as I had read, was in the habit of composing his pieces seated on a stone which formed part of a Druidical circle, for which reason the stone was called the chair of Rhys Goch; yes, my mind was full of enthusiastic fancies all connected with this Rhys Goch, and as I went along slowly, I repeated stanzas of furious war songs of his exciting his countrymen to exterminate the English, and likewise snatches of an abusive ode composed by him against a fox who had run away with his favourite peacock, a piece so abounding with hard words, that it was termed the Drunkard's Chokepear, as no drunkard was ever able to recite it, and ever and anon I wished I could come in contact with some native of the region with whom I could talk about Rhys Goch, and who could tell me whereabouts stood his chair.

Strolling along in this manner I was overtaken by an old fellow with a stick in his hand, walking very briskly. He had a crusty and rather conceited look. I spoke to him in Welsh, and he answered in English, saying that I need not trouble myself by speaking Welsh, as he had plenty of English, and of the very best. We were from first to last at cross purposes. I asked him about Rhys Goch and his chair. He told me that he knew nothing of either, and began to talk of Her Majesty's ministers and the fine sights of London. I asked him the name of a stream which, descending a gorge on our right, ran down the side of the valley, to join the river at its bottom. He told me that he did not know, and asked me the name of the Queen's eldest daughter. I told him I did not know, and remarked that it was very odd that he could not tell me the name of a stream in his own vale. He replied that it was not a bit more odd than that I could not tell him the name of the eldest daughter of the Queen of England: I told him that when I was in Wales I wanted to talk about Welsh matters, and he told me that when he was with English he wanted to talk about English matters. I returned to the subject of Rhys Goch and his chair, and he returned to the subject of Her Majesty's ministers and the fine folks of London. I told him that I cared not a straw about Her Majesty's ministers and the fine folks of London, and he replied that he cared not a straw for Rhys Goch, his chair, or old women's stories of any kind.

Regularly incensed against the old fellow I told him he was a bad Welshman, and he retorted by saying I was a bad Englishman. I said he appeared to know next to nothing. He retorted by saying I knew less than nothing, and almost inarticulate with passion added that he scorned to walk in such illiterate company, and suiting the action to the word sprang up a steep and rocky footpath on the right, probably a short cut to his domicile, and was out of sight in a twinkling. We were both wrong: I most so. He was crusty and conceited, but I ought to have humoured him and then I might have got out of him anything he knew, always supposing that he knew anything.

About an hour's walk from Tan y Bwlch brought me to Festiniog, which is situated on the top of a lofty hill looking down from the south-east, on the valley which I have described, and which as I know not its name I shall style the Valley of the numerous streams. I went to the inn, a large old-fashioned house standing near the church; the mistress of it was a queer-looking old woman, antiquated in her dress and rather blunt in her manner. Of her, after ordering dinner, I made inquiries respecting the chair of Rhys Goch, but she said that she had never heard of such a thing, and after glancing at me askew, for a moment, with a curiously-formed left eye which she had, went away muttering chair, chair; leaving me in a large and rather dreary parlour, to which she had shown me. I felt very fatigued, rather I believe

from that unlucky short cut than from the length of the way, for I had not come more than eighteen miles. Drawing a chair towards a table I sat down, and placing my elbows upon the board I leaned my face upon my upturned hands, and presently fell into a sweet sleep, from which I awoke exceedingly refreshed just as a maid opened the room door to lay the cloth.

After dinner I got up, went out and strolled about the place. It was small, and presented nothing very remarkable. Tired of strolling I went and leaned my back against the wall of the churchyard and enjoyed the cool of evening, for evening with its coolness and shadows had now come on.

As I leaned against the wall, an elderly man came up and entered into discourse with me. He told me he was a barber by profession, had travelled all over Wales, and had seen London. I asked him about the chair of Rhys Goch. He told me that he had heard of some such chair a long time ago, but could give me no information as to where it stood. I know not how it happened that he came to speak about my landlady, but speak about her he did. He said that she was a good kind of woman, but totally unqualified for business, as she knew not how to charge. On my observing that that was a piece of ignorance with which few landladies or landlords either were taxable, he said that however other publicans might overcharge, undercharging was her foible, and that she had brought herself very low in the world by it—that to his

certain knowledge she might have been worth thousands instead of the trifle which she was possessed of, and that she was particularly notorious for undercharging the English, a thing never before dreamt of in Wales. I told him that I was very glad that I had come under the roof of such a landlady; the old barber, however, said that she was setting a bad example, that such goings on could not last long, that he knew how things would end, and finally working himself up into a regular tiff left me abruptly without wishing me good night.

I returned to the inn, and called for lights; the lights were placed upon the table in the old-fashioned parlour, and I was left to myself. I walked up and down the room some time. At length, seeing some old books lying in a corner I laid hold of them, carried them to the table, sat down and began to inspect them; they were the three volumes of Scott's 'Cavalier'—I had seen this work when a youth and thought it a tiresome trashy publication. Looking over it now when I was grown old I thought so still, but I now detected in it what from want of knowledge I had not detected in my early years, what the highest genius, had it been manifested in every page, could not have compensated for, base fulsome adulation of the worthless great, and most unprincipled libelling of the truly noble ones of the earth, because they the sons of peasants and handycraftsmen stood up for the rights of outraged humanity, and proclaimed that it is worth makes the man and not em-

broidered clothing. The heartless, unprincipled son of the tyrant was transformed in that worthless book into a slightly dissipated, it is true, but upon the whole brave, generous and amiable being; and Harrison, the English Regulus, honest, brave, unflinching Harrison, into a pseudo-fanatic, a mixture of the rogue and fool. Harrison probably the man of the most noble and courageous heart that England ever produced, who when all was lost scorned to flee, like the second Charles from Worcester, but braved infamous judges and the gallows, who, when reproached on his mock trial with complicity in the death of the king, gave the noble answer that 'It was a thing not done in a corner,' and when in the cart on the way to Tyburn, on being asked jeeringly by a lord's bastard in the crowd, 'Where is the good old cause now?' thrice struck his strong fist on the breast which contained his courageous heart, exclaiming, 'Here, here, here!' Yet for that 'Cavalier,' that trumpery publication, the booksellers of England, on its first appearance, gave an order to the amount of six thousand pounds. But they were wise in their generation; they knew that the book would please the base, slavish taste of the age, a taste which the author of the work had had no slight share in forming.

Tired after a while with turning over the pages of the trashy 'Cavalier,' I returned the volumes to their place in the corner, blew out one candle, and taking the other in my hand marched off to bed.

CHAPTER XLVIII

The Bill—The Two Mountains—Sheet of Water—The Afanc-Crocodile—The Afanc-Beaver—Tai Hirion—Kind Woman—Arenig Vawr—The Beam and Mote—Bala.

After breakfasting I demanded my bill. I was curious to see how little the amount would be, for after what I had heard from the old barber the preceding evening about the utter ignorance of the landlady in making a charge, I naturally expected that I should have next to nothing to pay. When it was brought, however, and the landlady brought it herself, I could scarcely believe my eyes. Whether the worthy woman had lately come to a perception of the folly of undercharging, and had determined to adopt a different system. Whether it was that seeing me the only guest in the house she had determined to charge for my entertainment what she usually charged for that of two or three—strange, by the bye, that I should be the only guest in a house notorious for undercharging—I know not, but certain it is the amount of the bill was far, far from the next to nothing which the old barber had led me to suppose I should have to pay, who perhaps after all had very extravagant ideas with respect to making out a bill for a Saxon. It was, however, not a very unconscionable bill, and merely amounted to a trifle more than I had paid at Bethgelert for somewhat better entertainment.

Having paid the bill without demur and bidden the landlady farewell, who displayed the same kind of indifferent bluntness which she had manifested the day before, I set off in the direction of the east, intending that my next stage should be Bala. Passing through a toll-gate I found myself in a kind of suburb consisting of a few cottages. Struck with the neighbouring scenery, I stopped to observe it. A mighty mountain rises in the north almost abreast of Festiniog; another towards the east divided into two of unequal size. Seeing a woman of an interesting countenance seated at the door of a cottage I pointed to the hill towards the north and, speaking the Welsh language, inquired its name.

'That hill, sir,' said she, 'is called Moel Wyn.'

Now Moel Wyn signifies the white, bare hill.

'And how do you call those two hills towards the east?'

'We call one, sir, Mynydd Mawr, the other Mynydd Bach.'

Now Mynydd Mawr signifies the great mountain and Mynydd Bach the little one.

'Do any people live in those hills?'

'The men who work the quarries, sir, live in those hills. They and their wives and their children. No other people.'

'Have you any English?'

'I have not, sir. No people who live on this side the talcot (toll-gate) for a long way have any English.'

I proceeded on my journey. The country for

some way eastward of Festiniog is very wild and barren, consisting of huge hills without trees or verdure. About three miles distance, however, there is a beautiful valley, which you look down upon from the southern side of the road, after having surmounted a very steep ascent. This valley is fresh and green and the lower parts of the hills on its farther side are, here and there, adorned with groves. At the eastern end is a deep dark gorge, or ravine, down which tumbles a brook in a succession of small cascades. The ravine is close by the road. The brook after disappearing for a time shows itself again far down in the valley, and is doubtless one of the tributaries of the Tan y Bwlch river, perhaps the very same brook the name of which I could not learn the preceding day in the vale.

As I was gazing on the prospect an old man driving a peat cart came from the direction in which I was going. I asked him the name of the ravine and he told me it was Ceunant Coomb or hollow-dingle coomb. I asked the name of the brook, and he told me that it was called the brook of the hollow-dingle coomb, adding that it ran under Pont Newydd, though where that was I knew not. Whilst he was talking with me he stood uncovered. Yes, the old peat driver stood with his hat in his hand whilst answering the questions of the poor, dusty foot-traveller. What a fine thing to be an Englishman in Wales!

In about an hour I came to a wild moor; the moor extended for miles and miles. It was

bounded on the east and south by immense hills and moels. On I walked at a round pace, the sun scorching me sore, along a dusty, hilly road, now up, now down. Nothing could be conceived more cheerless than the scenery around. The ground on each side of the road was mossy and rushy—no houses—instead of them were peat stacks, here and there, standing in their blackness. Nothing living to be seen except a few miserable sheep picking the wretched herbage, or lying panting on the shady side of the peat clumps. At length I saw something which appeared to be a sheet of water at the bottom of a low ground on my right. It looked far off —'Shall I go and see what it is?' thought I to myself. 'No,' thought I. 'It is too far off'—so on I walked till I lost sight of it, when I repented and thought I would go and see what it was. So I dashed down the moory slope on my right and presently saw the object again—and now I saw that it was water. I sped towards it through gorse and heather, occasionally leaping a deep drain. At last I reached it. It was a small lake. Wearied and panting, I flung myself on its bank and gazed upon it.

There lay the lake in the low bottom, surrounded by the heathery hillocks; there it lay quite still, the hot sun reflected upon its surface, which shone like a polished blue shield. Near the shore it was shallow, at least near that shore upon which I lay. But farther on, my eye, practised in deciding upon the depths of waters, saw reason to suppose that its depth was very

great. As I gazed upon it my mind indulged in strange musings. I thought of the afanc, a creature which some have supposed to be the harmless and industrious beaver, others the frightful and destructive crocodile. I wondered whether the afanc was the crocodile or the beaver, and speedily had no doubt that the name was originally applied to the crocodile.

'O, who can doubt,' thought I, 'that the word was originally intended for something monstrous and horrible? Is there not something horrible in the look and sound of the word afanc, something connected with the opening and shutting of immense jaws, and the swallowing of writhing prey? Is not the word a fitting brother of the Arabic timsah, denoting the dread horny lizard of the waters? Moreover, have we not the voice of tradition that the afanc was something monstrous? Does it not say that Hu the Mighty, the inventor of husbandry who brought the Cumry from the summer-country, drew the old afanc out of the lake of lakes with his four gigantic oxen? Would he have had recourse to them to draw out the little harmless beaver? O, surely not. Yet have I no doubt that when the crocodile had disappeared from the lands, where the Cumric language was spoken, the name afanc was applied to the beaver, probably his successor in the pool, the beaver now called in Cumric, Llostlydan, or the broad-tailed, for tradition's voice is strong that the beaver has at one time been called the afanc.' Then I wondered whether the pool before me had been

the haunt of the afanc, considered both as crocodile and beaver. I saw no reason to suppose that it had not. 'If crocodiles,' thought I, 'ever existed in Britain, and who shall say that they have not, seeing that their remains have been discovered, why should they not have haunted this pool? If beavers ever existed in Britain, and do not tradition and Giraldus say that they have, why should they not have existed in this pool?

'At a time almost inconceivably remote, when the hills around were covered with woods, through which the elk and the bison and the wild cow strolled, when men were rare throughout the lands and unlike in most things to the present race—at such a period—and such a period there has been—I can easily conceive that the afanc-crocodile haunted this pool, and that when the elk or bison or wild cow came to drink of its waters the grim beast would occasionally rush forth and, seizing his bellowing victim, would return with it to the deeps before me to luxuriate at his ease upon its flesh. And at a time less remote, when the crocodile was no more, and though the woods still covered the hills, and wild cattle strolled about, men were more numerous than before, and less unlike the present race, I can easily conceive this lake to have been the haunt of the afanc-beaver, that he here built cunningly his house of trees and clay, and that to this lake the native would come with his net and his spear to hunt the animal for his precious fur. Probably if the depths of that

pool were searched relics of the crocodile and the beaver might be found, along with other strange things connected with the periods in which they respectively lived. Happy were I if for a brief space I could become a Cingalese that I might swim out far into that pool, dive down into its deepest part and endeavour to discover any strange things which beneath its surface may lie.' Much in this guise rolled my thoughts as I lay stretched on the margin of the lake.

Satiated with musing I at last got up and endeavoured to regain the road. I found it at last, though not without considerable difficulty. I passed over moors, black and barren, along a dusty road till I came to a valley; I was now almost choked with dust and thirst, and longed for nothing in the world so much as for water; suddenly I heard its blessed sound, and perceived a rivulet on my left hand. It was crossed by two bridges, one immensely old and terribly dilapidated, the other old enough, but in better repair—went and drank under the oldest bridge of the two. The water tasted of the peat of the moors, nevertheless I drank greedily of it, for one must not be over-delicate upon the moors.

Refreshed with my draught I proceeded briskly on my way, and in a little time saw a range of white buildings, diverging from the road on the right hand, the gable of the first abutting upon it. A kind of farmyard was before them. A respectable-looking woman was standing in the

yard. I went up to her and inquired the name of the place.

'These houses, sir,' said she, 'are called Tai Hirion Mignaint. Look over that door and you will see T. H., which letters stand for Tai Hirion. Mignaint is the name of the place where they stand.'

I looked, and upon a stone which formed the lintel of the middlemost door I read 'T. H. 1630.'

The words Tai Hirion it will be as well to say signify the long houses.

I looked long and steadfastly at the inscription, my mind full of thoughts of the past.

'Many a year has rolled by since these houses were built,' said I, as I sat down on a stepping-stone.

'Many indeed, sir,' said the woman, 'and many a strange thing has happened.'

'Did you ever hear of one Oliver Cromwell?' said I.

'O yes, sir, and of King Charles too. The men of both have been in this yard and have baited their horses; aye, and have mounted their horses from the stone on which you sit.'

'I suppose they were hardly here together?' said I.

'No, no, sir,' said the woman, 'they were bloody enemies, and could never set their horses together.'

'Are these long houses,' said I, 'inhabited by different families?'

'Only by one, sir, they make now one farm-house.'

'Are you the mistress of it?' said I.

'I am, sir, and my husband is the master. Can I bring you anything, sir?'

'Some water,' said I, 'for I am thirsty, though I drank under the old bridge.'

The good woman brought me a basin of delicious milk and water.

'What are the names of the two bridges,' said I, 'a little way from here?'

'They are called, sir, the old and new bridge of Tai Hirion; at least we call them so.'

'And what do you call the ffrwd that runs beneath them?'

'I believe, sir, it is called the river Twerin.'

'Do you know a lake far up there amidst the moors?'

'I have seen it, sir; they call it Llyn Twerin.'

'Does the river Twerin flow from it?'

'I believe it does, sir, but I do not know.'

'Is the lake deep?'

'I have heard that it is very deep, sir, so much so that nobody knows its depth.'

'Are there fish in it?'

'Digon, sir, digon iawn, and some very large. I once saw a Pen-hwyad from that lake which weighed fifty pounds.'

After a little farther conversation I got up, and thanking the kind woman departed. I soon left the moors behind me and continued walking till I came to a few houses on the margin of a meadow or fen in a valley through which the way trended to the east. They were almost overshadowed by an enormous mountain which

rose beyond the fen on the south. Seeing a house which bore a sign, and at the door of which a horse stood tied, I went in, and a woman coming to meet me in a kind of passage, I asked her if I could have some ale.

'Of the best, sir,' she replied, and conducted me down the passage into a neat room, partly kitchen, partly parlour, the window of which looked out upon the fen. A rustic-looking man sat smoking at a table with a jug of ale before him. I sat down near him, and the good woman brought me a similar jug of ale, which on tasting I found excellent. My spirits which had been for some time very flagging presently revived, and I entered into conversation with my companion at the table. From him I learned that he was a farmer of the neighbourhood, that the horse tied before the door belonged to him, that the present times were very bad for the producers of grain, with very slight likelihood of improvement; that the place at which we were was called Rhyd y fen, or the ford across the fen; that it was just half way between Festiniog and Bala, that the clergyman of the parish was called Mr. Pughe, a good kind of man, but very purblind in a spiritual sense; and finally that there was no safe religion in the world, save that of the Calvinistic Methodists, to which my companion belonged.

Having finished my ale I paid for it, and leaving the Calvinistic farmer still smoking, I departed from Rhyd y fen. On I went along the valley, the enormous hill on my right, a moel of

about half its height on my left, and a tall hill bounding the prospect in the east, the direction in which I was going. After a little time meeting two women I asked them the name of the mountain to the south.

'Arenig Vawr,' they replied, or something like it.

Presently meeting four men I put the same question to the foremost, a stout, burly, intelligent-looking fellow, of about fifty. He gave me the same name as the women. I asked him if anybody lived upon it.

'No,' said he, 'too cold for man.'

'Fox?' said I.

'No! too cold for fox.'

'Crow?' said I.

'No, too cold for crow; crow would be starved upon it.' He then looked me in the face, expecting probably that I should smile.

I, however, looked at him with all the gravity of a judge, whereupon he also observed the gravity of a judge, and we continued looking at each other with all the gravity of judges till we both simultaneously turned away, he followed by his companions going his path, and I going mine.

I subsequently remembered that Arenig is mentioned in a Welsh poem, though in anything but a flattering and advantageous manner. The writer calls it Arenig ddiffaith or barren Arenig, and says that it intercepts from him the view of his native land. Arenig is certainly barren enough, for there is neither tree nor shrub

upon it, but there is something majestic in its huge bulk. Of all the hills which I saw in Wales none made a greater impression upon me.

Towards evening I arrived at a very small and pretty village in the middle of which was a toll-gate—seeing an old woman seated at the door of the gate-house I asked her the name of the village. 'I have no Saesneg!' she screamed out.

'I have plenty of Cumraeg,' said I, and repeated my question. Whereupon she told me that it was called Tref y Talcot—the village of the toll-gate. That it was a very nice village, and that she was born there. She then pointed to two young women who were walking towards the gate at a very slow pace and told me they were English. 'I do not know them,' said I. The old lady, who was somewhat deaf, thinking that I said I did not know English, leered at me complacently, and said that in that case I was like herself for she did not speak a word of English, adding that a body should not be considered a fool for not speaking English. She then said that the young women had been taking a walk together, and that they were much in each other's company for the sake of conversation, and no wonder, as the poor simpletons could not speak a word of Welsh. I thought of the beam and mote mentioned in Scripture, and then cast a glance of compassion on the two poor young women. For a moment I fancied myself in the times of Owen Glendower, and that I saw two females, whom his marauders had

carried off from Cheshire or Shropshire to toil and slave in the Welshery, walking together after the labours of the day were done, and bemoaning their misfortunes in their own homely English.

Shortly after leaving the village of the toll-gate I came to a beautiful valley. On my right hand was a river the farther bank of which was fringed with trees; on my left was a gentle ascent, the lower part of which was covered with rich grass, and the upper with yellow luxuriant corn; a little farther on was a green grove, behind which rose up a moel. A more bewitching scene I never beheld. Ceres and Pan seemed in this place to have met to hold their bridal. The sun now descending shone nobly upon the whole. After staying for some time to gaze, I proceeded, and soon met several carts, from the driver of one of which I learned that I was yet three miles from Bala. I continued my way and came to a bridge, a little way beyond which I overtook two men, one of whom, an old fellow, held a very long whip in his hand, and the other, a much younger man with a cap on his head, led a horse. When I came up the old fellow took off his hat to me, and I forthwith entered into conversation with him. I soon gathered from him that he was a horse-dealer from Bala, and that he had been out on the road with his servant to break a horse. I astonished the old man with my knowledge of Welsh and horses, and learned from him, for conceiving I was one of the right sort, he was very communicative, two or three curious particulars connected with

the Welsh mode of breaking horses. Discourse shortened the way to both of us, and we were soon in Bala. In the middle of the town he pointed to a large old-fashioned house on the right hand, at the bottom of a little square, and said, 'Your honour was just asking me about an inn. That is the best inn in Wales, and if your honour is as good a judge of an inn as of a horse, I think you will say so when you leave it. Prydnawn da 'chwi!'

CHAPTER XLIX

Tom Jenkins—Ale of Bala—Sober Moments—Local Prejudices—The States—Unprejudiced Man—Welsh Pensilvanian Settlers—Drapery Line—Evening Saunter.

SCARCELY had I entered the door of the inn when a man presented himself to me with a low bow. He was about fifty years of age, somewhat above the middle size, and had grizzly hair, and a dark, freckled countenance, in which methought I saw a considerable dash of humour. He wore brown clothes, had no hat on his head, and held a napkin in his hand. 'Are you the master of this hotel?' said I.

'No, your honour,' he replied, 'I am only the waiter, but I officiate for my master in all things; my master has great confidence in me, sir.'

'And I have no doubt,' said I, 'that he could not place his confidence in any one more worthy.'

With a bow yet lower than the preceding one the waiter replied with a smirk and a grimace, 'Thanks, your honour, for your good opinion. I assure your honour that I am deeply obliged.'

His air, manner, and even accent, were so like those of a Frenchman, that I could not forbear asking him whether he was one.

He shook his head and replied, 'No, your honour, no, I am not a Frenchman, but a native of this poor country, Tom Jenkins by name.'

'Well,' said I, 'you really look and speak like

a Frenchman, but no wonder; the Welsh and French are much of the same blood. Please now to show me into the parlour.'

He opened the door of a large apartment, placed a chair by a table which stood in the middle, and then, with another bow, requested to know my farther pleasure. After ordering dinner I said that as I was thirsty I should like to have some ale forthwith.

'Ale you shall have, your honour,' said Tom, 'and some of the best ale that can be drunk. This house is famous for ale.'

'I suppose you get your ale from Llangollen,' said I, 'which is celebrated for its ale over Wales.'

'Get our ale from Llangollen?' said Tom, with a sneer of contempt, 'no, nor anything else. As for the ale it was brewed in this house by your honour's humble servant.'

'O,' said I, 'if you brewed it, it must of course be good. Pray bring me some immediately, for I am anxious to drink ale of your brewing.'

'Your honour shall be obeyed,' said Tom, and disappearing returned in a twinkling with a tray on which stood a jug filled with liquor and a glass. He forthwith filled the glass, and pointing to its contents said:

'There, your honour, did you ever see such ale? Observe its colour! Does it not look for all the world as pale and delicate as cowslip wine?'

'I wish it may not taste like cowslip wine,' said I; 'to tell you the truth, I am no par-

ticular admirer of ale that looks pale and delicate; for I always think there is no strength in it.'

'Taste it, your honour,' said Tom, 'and tell me if you ever tasted such ale.'

I tasted it, and then took a copious draught. The ale was indeed admirable, equal to the best that I had ever before drunk—rich and mellow, with scarcely any smack of the hop in it, and though so pale and delicate to the eye, nearly as strong as brandy. I commended it highly to the worthy Jenkins, who exultantly exclaimed:

'That Llangollen ale indeed! no, no! ale like that, your honour, was never brewed in that trumpery hole Llangollen.'

'You seem to have a very low opinion of Llangollen?' said I.

'How can I have anything but a low opinion of it, your honour? A trumpery hole it is, and ever will remain so.'

'Many people of the first quality go to visit it,' said I.

'That is because it lies so handy for England, your honour. If it did not, nobody would go to see it. What is there to see in Llangollen?'

'There is not much to see in the town, I admit,' said I, 'but the scenery about it is beautiful: what mountains!'

'Mountains, your honour, mountains! well, we have mountains too, and as beautiful as those of Llangollen. Then we have our lake, our Llyn Tegid, the lake of beauty. Show me anything like that near Llangollen?'

'Then,' said I, 'there is your mound, your

Tomen Bala. The Llangollen people can show nothing like that.'

Tom Jenkins looked at me for a moment with some surprise, and then said: 'I see you have been here before, sir.'

'No,' said I, 'never, but I have read about the Tomen Bala in books, both Welsh and English.'

'You have, sir,' said Tom. 'Well, I am rejoiced to see so book-learned a gentleman in our house. The Tomen Bala has puzzled many a head. What do the books which mention it say about it, your honour?'

'Very little,' said I, 'beyond mentioning it; what do the people here say of it?'

'All kinds of strange things, your honour.'

'Do they say who built it?'

'Some say the Tylwyth Teg built it, others that it was cast up over a dead king by his people. The truth is, nobody here knows who built it, or anything about it, save that it is a wonder. Ah, those people of Llangollen can show nothing like it.'

'Come,' said I, 'you must not be so hard upon the people of Llangollen. They appear to me upon the whole to be an eminently respectable body.'

The Celtic waiter gave a genuine French shrug. 'Excuse me, your honour, for being of a different opinion. They are all drunkards.'

'I have occasionally seen drunken people at Llangollen,' said I, 'but I have likewise seen a great many sober.'

'That is, your honour, you have seen them in

their sober moments; but if you had watched, your honour, if you had kept your eye on them, you would have seen them reeling too.'

'That I can hardly believe,' said I.

'Your honour can't! but I can who know them. They are all drunkards, and nobody can live among them without being a drunkard. There was my nephew ——'

'What of him?' said I.

'Why, he went to Llangollen, your honour, and died of a drunken fever in less than a month.'

'Well, but might he not have died of the same, if he had remained at home?'

'No, your honour, no! he lived here many a year, and never died of a drunken fever; he was rather fond of liquor, it is true, but he never died at Bala of a drunken fever; but when he went to Llangollen he did. Now, your honour, if there is not something more drunken about Llangollen than about Bala, why did my nephew die at Llangollen of a drunken fever?'

'Really,' said I, 'you are such a close reasoner, that I do not like to dispute with you. One observation, however, I wish to make: I have lived at Llangollen without, I hope, becoming a drunkard.'

'O, your honour is out of the question,' said the Celtic waiter with a strange grimace. 'Your honour is an Englishman, an English gentleman, and of course could live all the days of your life at Llangollen without being a drunkard, he, he! Who ever heard of an Englishman, especially an English gentleman, being a drunkard, he, he, he!

And now, your honour, pray excuse me, for I must go and see that your honour's dinner is being got ready in a suitable manner. '

Thereupon he left me with a bow yet lower than any I had previously seen him make. If his manners put me in mind of those of a Frenchman, his local prejudices brought powerfully to my recollection those of a Spaniard. Tom Jenkins swears by Bala and abuses Llangollen, and calls its people drunkards, just as a Spaniard exalts his own village and vituperates the next and its inhabitants, whom though he will not call them drunkards, unless indeed he happens to be a Gallegan, he will not hesitate to term 'una caterva de pillos y embusteros.'

The dinner when it appeared was excellent, and consisted of many more articles than I had ordered. After dinner, as I sat 'trifling' with my cold brandy-and-water, an individual entered, a short, thick, dumpy man about thirty, with brown clothes and a broad hat, and holding in his hand a large leather bag. He gave me a familiar nod, and passing by the table at which I sat, to one near the window, he flung the bag upon it, and seating himself in a chair with his profile towards me, he untied the bag, from which he poured a large quantity of sovereigns upon the table and fell to counting them. After counting them three times he placed them again in the bag which he tied up, then taking a small book, seemingly an account-book, out of his pocket, he wrote something in it with a pencil, then putting it in his pocket he took the bag

and unlocking a beaufet which stood at some distance behind him against the wall, he put the bag into a drawer; then again locking the beaufet he sat down in the chair, then tilting the chair back upon its hind legs he kept swaying himself backwards and forwards upon it, his toes sometimes upon the ground, sometimes mounting until they tapped against the nether side of the table, surveying me all the time with a queer kind of a side glance, and occasionally ejecting saliva upon the carpet in the direction of the place where I sat.

'Fine weather, sir,' said I at last, rather tired of being skewed and spit at in this manner.

'Why yaas,' said the figure; 'the day is tolerably fine, but I have seen a finer.'

'Well, I don't remember to have seen one,' said I; 'it is as fine a day as I have seen during the present season, and finer weather than I have seen during this season I do not think I ever saw before.'

'The weather is fine enough for Britain,' said the figure, 'but there are other countries besides Britain.'

'Why,' said I, 'there 's the States, 'tis true.'

'Ever been in the States, Mr.?' said the figure quickly.

'Have I ever been in the States,' said I, 'have I ever been in the States?'

'Perhaps you are of the States, Mr.; I thought so from the first.'

'The States are fine countries,' said I.

'I guess they are, Mr.'

'It would be no easy matter to whip the States.'

'So I should guess, Mr.'

'That is, single-handed,' said I.

'Single-handed, no nor double-handed either. Let England and France and the State which they are now trying to whip without being able to do it, that 's Russia, all unite in a union to whip the Union, and if instead of whipping the States they don't get a whipping themselves, call me a braying jackass——'

'I see, Mr.' said I, 'that you are a sensible man, because you speak very much my own opinion. However, as I am an unprejudiced person, like yourself, I wish to do justice to other countries—the States are fine countries—but there are other fine countries in the world. I say nothing of England; catch me saying anything good of England; but I call Wales a fine country; gainsay it who may, I call Wales a fine country.'

'So it is, Mr.'

'I 'll go farther,' said I; 'I wish to do justice to everything: I call the Welsh a fine language.'

'So it is, Mr. Ah, I see you are an unprejudiced man. You don't understand Welsh, I guess.'

'I don't understand Welsh,' said I; 'I don't understand Welsh. That 's what I call a good one.'

'Medrwch siarad Cumraeg?' said the short figure, spitting on the carpet.

'Medraf,' said I.

'You can, Mr.! Well, if that don't whip the Union. But I see: you were born in the States of Welsh parents.'

'No harm in being born in the States of Welsh parents,' said I.

'None at all, Mr.; I was myself, and the first language I learnt to speak was Welsh. Did your people come from Bala, Mr.?'

'Why no! Did yourn?'

'Why yaas—at least from the neighbourhood. What State do you come from? Virginny?'

'Why no!'

'Perhaps Pensilvany country?'

'Pensilvany is a fine state,' said I.

'So it is, Mr. O, that is your state, is it? I come from Varmont.'

'You do, do you? Well, Varmont is not a bad state, but not equal to Pensilvany, and I'll tell you two reasons why; first it has not been so long settled, and second there is not so much Welsh blood in it as there is in Pensilvany.'

'Is there much Welsh blood in Pensilvany then?'

'Plenty, Mr., plenty. Welsh flocked over to Pensilvany even as far back as the time of William Penn, who as you know, Mr., was the first founder of the Pensilvany State. And that puts me in mind that there is a curious account extant of the adventures of one of the old Welsh settlers in Pensylvania. It is to be found in a letter in an old Welsh book. The letter is dated 1705, and is from one Huw Jones, born of Welsh parents in Pensilvany country, to a cousin of his

of the same name residing in the neighbourhood of this very town of Bala in Merionethshire, where you and I, Mr., now are. It is in answer to certain inquiries made by the cousin, and is written in pure old Welsh language. It gives an account of how the writer's father left this neighbourhood to go to Pensilvania; how he embarked on board the ship *William Penn*; how he was thirty weeks on the voyage from the Thames to the Delaware. Only think, Mr., of a ship nowadays being thirty weeks on the passage from the Thames to the Delaware river; how he learnt the English language on the voyage; how he and his companions nearly perished with hunger in the wild wood after they landed; how Pensilvania city was built; how he became a farmer and married a Welsh woman, the widow of a Welshman from shire Denbigh, by whom he had the writer and several other children; how the father used to talk to his children about his native region and the places round about Bala, and fill their breasts with longing for the land of their fathers; and, finally, how the old man died leaving his children and their mother in prosperous circumstances. It is a wonderful letter, Mr., all written in the pure old Welsh language.'

'I say, Mr., you are a cute one and know a thing or two. I suppose Welsh was the first language you learnt, like myself?'

'No it wasn't—I like to speak the truth—never took to either speaking or reading the Welsh language till I was past sixteen.'

'Stonishing! but see the force of blood at last. In any line of business?'

'No, Mr., can't say I am.'

'Have money in your pocket, and travel for pleasure. Come to see father's land.'

'Come to see old Wales. And what brings you here, Hiraeth?'

'That's longing. No, not exactly. Came over to England to see what I could do. Got in with house at Liverpool in the drapery business. Travel for it hereabouts having connections and speaking the language. Do branch business here for a banking-house besides. Manage to get on smartly.'

'You look a smart 'un. But don't you find it sometimes hard to compete with English travellers in the drapery line?'

'I guess not. English travellers! set of nat'rals. Don't know the language and nothing else. Could whip a dozen any day. Regularly flummox them.'

'You do, Mr.? Ah, I see you're a cute 'un. Glad to have met you.'

'I say, Mr., you have not told me from what county your forefathers were.'

'From Norfolk and Cornwall counties.'

'Didn't know there were such counties in Wales.'

'But there are in England.'

'Why, you told me you were of Welsh parents.'

'No I didn't. You told yourself so.'

'But how did you come to know Welsh?'

'Why, that's my bit of a secret.'

'But you are of the United States.'

'Never knew that before.'

'Mr., you flummox me.'

'Just as you do the English drapery travellers. Ah, you 're a cute 'un—but do you think it altogether a cute trick to stow all those sovereigns in that drawer?'

'Who should take them out, Mr.?'

'Who should take them out? Why, any of the swell mob that should chance to be in the house might unlock the drawer with their flash keys as soon as your back is turned, and take out all the coin.'

'But there are none of the swell mob here.'

'How do you know that?' said I, 'the swell mob travel wide about—how do you know that I am not one of them?'

'The swell mob don't speak Welsh, I guess.'

'Don't be too sure of that,' said I—'the swell coves spare no expense for their education—so that they may be able to play parts according to circumstances. I strongly advise you, Mr., to put that bag somewhere else lest something should happen to it.'

'Well, Mr., I 'll take your advice. These are my quarters, and I was merely going to keep the money here for convenience' sake. The money belongs to the bank, so it is but right to stow it away in the bank safe. I certainly should be loth to leave it here with you in the room, after what you have said.' He then got up, unlocked the drawer, took out the bag, and with a 'Good night, Mr.,' left the room.

I 'trifled' over my brandy-and-water till I finished it, and then walked forth to look at the town. I turned up a street, which led to the east, and soon found myself beside the lake at the north-west extremity of which Bala stands. It appeared a very noble sheet of water stretching from north to south for several miles. As, however, night was fast coming on I did not see it to its full advantage. After gazing upon it for a few minutes I sauntered back to the square, or market-place, and leaning my back against a wall, listened to the conversation of two or three groups of people who were standing near, my motive for doing so being a desire to know what kind of Welsh they spoke. Their language as far as I heard it differed in scarcely any respect from that of Llangollen. I, however, heard very little of it, for I had scarcely kept my station a minute when the good folks became uneasy, cast side-glances at me, first dropped their conversation to whispers, next held their tongues altogether, and finally moved off, some going to their homes, others moving to a distance and then grouping together—even certain ragged boys who were playing and chattering near me became uneasy, first stood still, then stared at me, and then took themselves off and played and chattered at a distance. Now what was the cause of all this? Why, suspicion of the Saxon. The Welsh are afraid lest an Englishman should understand their language, and, by hearing their conversation, become acquainted with their private affairs, or by listening to it, pick up their language which

they have no mind that he should know—and their very children sympathize with them. All conquered people are suspicious of their conquerors. The English have forgot that they ever conquered the Welsh, but some ages will elapse before the Welsh forget that the English have conquered them.

CHAPTER L

The Breakfast—The Tomen Bala—'El Punto de la Vana.'

I SLEPT soundly that night, as well I might, my bed being good and my body weary. I arose about nine, dressed and went down to the parlour which was vacant. I rang the bell, and on Tom Jenkins making his appearance I ordered breakfast, and then asked for the Welsh American, and learned that he had breakfasted very early and had set out in a gig on a journey to some distance. In about twenty minutes after I had ordered it my breakfast made its appearance. A noble breakfast it was; such indeed as I might have read of, but had never before seen. There was tea and coffee, a goodly white loaf and butter; there were a couple of eggs and two mutton chops. There was broiled and pickled salmon—there was fried trout—there were also potted trout and potted shrimps. Mercy upon me! I had never previously seen such a breakfast set before me, nor indeed have I subsequently. Yes, I have subsequently, and at that very house when I visited it some months after.

After breakfast I called for the bill. I forget the exact amount of the bill, but remember that it was very moderate. I paid it and gave the noble Thomas a shilling, which he received with a bow and truly French smile, that is a grimace.

When I departed the landlord and landlady, highly respectable-looking elderly people, were standing at the door, one on each side, and dismissed me with suitable honour, he with a low bow, she with a profound curtsey.

Having seen little of the town on the preceding evening, I determined before setting out for Llangollen to become better acquainted with it, and accordingly took another stroll about it.

Bala is a town containing three or four thousand inhabitants, situated near the northern end of an oblong valley, at least two-thirds of which are occupied by Llyn Tegid. It has two long streets, extending from north to south, a few narrow cross ones, an ancient church, partly overgrown with ivy, with a very pointed steeple, and a town-hall of some antiquity, in which Welsh interludes used to be performed. After gratifying my curiosity with respect to the town, I visited the mound—the wondrous Tomen Bala.

The Tomen Bala stands at the northern end of the town. It is apparently formed of clay, is steep and of difficult ascent. In height it is about thirty feet, and in diameter at the top about fifty. On the top grows a gwern or alder-tree, about a foot thick, its bark terribly scotched with letters and uncouth characters, carved by the idlers of the town who are fond of resorting to the top of the mound in fine weather, and lying down on the grass which covers it. The Tomen is about the same size as Glendower's Mount on the Dee, which it much resembles in shape. Both belong to that brotherhood of

artificial mounds of unknown antiquity, found scattered, here and there, throughout Europe and the greater part of Asia, the most remarkable specimen of which is, perhaps, that which stands on the right side of the way from Adrianople to Stamboul, and which is called by the Turks, Mourad Tepehsi, or the tomb of Mourad. Which mounds seem to have been originally intended as places of sepulture, but in many instances were afterwards used as strongholds, bonhills or beacon-heights, or as places on which adoration was paid to the host of heaven.

From the Tomen there is a noble view of the Bala valley, the Lake of Beauty up to its southern extremity and the neighbouring and distant mountains. Of Bala, its lake and Tomen, I shall have something to say on a future occasion.

Leaving Bala I passed through the village of Llanfair and found myself by the Dee, whose course I followed for some way. Coming to the northern extremity of the Bala valley, I entered a pass tending due north. Here the road slightly diverged from the river. I sped along, delighted with the beauty of the scenery. On my left was a high bank covered with trees, on my right a grove, through openings in which I occasionally caught glimpses of the river, over whose farther side towered noble hills. An hour's walking brought me into a comparatively open country, fruitful and charming. At about one o'clock I reached a large village, the name of which, like those of most Welsh villages, began with Llan. There I refreshed myself for an hour or two in

an old-fashioned inn, and then resumed my journey.

I passed through Corwen; again visited Glendower's monticle upon the Dee, and reached Llangollen shortly after sunset, where I found my beloved two well and glad to see me.

That night, after tea, Henrietta played on the guitar the old muleteer tune of 'El Punto de la Vana,' or the main point at the Havanna, whilst I sang the words:—

'Never trust the sample when you go your cloth to buy:
The woman 's most deceitful that 's dressed most daintily.
The lasses of Havanna ride to mass in coaches yellow,
But ere they go they ask if the priest 's a handsome fellow.
The lasses of Havanna as mulberries are dark,
And try to make them fairer by taking Jesuit's bark.'

CHAPTER LI

The Ladies of Llangollen—Sir Alured—Eisteddfodau—
'Pleasure and Care.'

SHORTLY after my return I paid a visit to my friends at the Vicarage, who were rejoiced to see me back, and were much entertained with the account I gave of my travels. I next went to visit the old church clerk of whom I had so much to say on a former occasion. After having told him some particulars of my expedition, to all of which he listened with great attention, especially to that part which related to the church of Penmynydd and the tomb of the Tudors, I got him to talk about the ladies of Llangollen of whom I knew very little save what I had heard from general report. I found he remembered their first coming to Llangollen, their living in lodgings, their purchasing the ground called Pen y maes, and their erecting upon it the mansion to which the name of Plas Newydd was given. He said they were very eccentric, but good and kind, and had always shown most particular favour to himself; that both were highly connected, especially Lady Eleanor Butler, who was connected by blood with the great Duke of Ormond who commanded the armies of Charles in Ireland in the time of the great rebellion, and also with the Duke of Ormond who succeeded

Marlborough in the command of the armies in the Low Countries in the time of Queen Anne, and who fled to France shortly after the accession of George the First to the throne, on account of being implicated in the treason of Harley and Bolingbroke; and that her ladyship was particularly fond of talking of both those dukes, and relating anecdotes concerning them. He said that the ladies were in the habit of receiving the very first people in Britain, 'amongst whom,' said the old church clerk, 'was an ancient gentleman of most engaging appearance and captivating manners, called Sir Alured C——. He was in the army, and in his youth owing to the beauty of his person, was called "the handsome captain." It was said that one of the royal princesses was desperately in love with him, and that on that account George the Third insisted on his going to India. Whether or not there was truth in the report, to India he went, where he served with distinction for a great many years. On his return, which was not till he was upwards of eighty, he was received with great favour by William the Fourth, who amongst other things made him a Field-Marshal. As often as October came round did this interesting and venerable gentleman make his appearance at Llangollen to pay his respects to the ladies, especially to Lady Eleanor, whom he had known at Court as far back they say as the American war. It was rumoured at Llangollen that Lady Eleanor's death was a grievous blow to Sir Alured, and that he would never be seen there again. How-

ever, when October came round he made his appearance at the Vicarage, where he had always been in the habit of taking up his quarters, and called on and dined with Miss Ponsonby at Plas Newydd, but it was observed that he was not so gay as he had formerly been. In the evening on his taking leave of Miss Ponsonby, she said that he had used her ill. Sir Alured coloured and asked her what she meant, adding that he had not to his knowledge used any person ill in the course of his life. "But I say you have used me ill, very ill," said Miss Ponsonby, raising her voice, and the words "very ill" she repeated several times. At last the old soldier waxing rather warm demanded an explanation. "I'll give it you," said Miss Ponsonby; "were you not going away after having only kissed my hand?" "O," said the general, "if that is my offence, I will soon make you reparation," and instantly gave her a hearty smack on the lips, which ceremony he never forgot to repeat after dining with her on subsequent occasions.'

We got on the subject of bards, and I mentioned to him Gruffydd Hiraethog, the old poet buried in the chancel of Llangollen church. The old clerk was not aware that he was buried there, and said that though he had heard of him he knew little or nothing about him.

'Where was he born?' said he.

'In Denbighshire,' I replied, 'near the mountain Hiraethog, from which circumstance he called himself in poetry Gruffydd Hiraethog.'

'When did he flourish?'

'About the middle of the sixteenth century.'

'What did he write?'

'A great many didactic pieces,' said I; 'in one of which is a famous couplet to this effect:—

> 'He who satire loves to sing
> On himself will satire bring.'

'Did you ever hear of William Lleyn?' said the old gentleman.

'Yes,' said I; 'he was a pupil of Hiraethog, and wrote an elegy on his death, in which he alludes to Gruffydd's skill in an old Welsh metre, called the Cross Consonancy, in the following manner:—

> 'In Eden's grove from Adam's mouth
> Upsprang a muse of noble growth;
> So from thy grave, O poet wise,
> Cross Consonancy's boughs shall rise.'

'Really,' said the old clerk, 'you seem to know something about Welsh poetry. But what is meant by a muse springing up from Adam's mouth in Eden?'

'Why, I suppose,' said I, 'that Adam invented poetry.'

I made inquiries of him about the eisteddfodau or sessions of bards, and expressed a wish to be present at one of them. He said that they were very interesting; that bards met at particular periods and recited poems on various subjects which had been given out beforehand, and that prizes were allotted to those whose compositions were deemed the best by the judges. He said that he had himself won the prize for the best

englyn on a particular subject at an eisteddfod at which Sir Watkin Williams Wynn presided, and at which Heber, afterwards Bishop of Calcutta, was present, who appeared to understand Welsh well, and who took much interest in the proceedings of the meeting.

Our discourse turning on the latter Welsh poets, I asked him if he had been acquainted with Jonathan Hughes, who the reader will remember was the person whose grandson I met and in whose arm-chair I sat at Tŷ yn y pistyll, shortly after my coming to Llangollen. He said that he had been well acquainted with him, and had helped to carry him to the grave, adding, that he was something of a poet, but that he had always considered his forte lay in strong good sense rather than poetry. I mentioned Thomas Edwards, whose picture I had seen in Valle Crucis Abbey. He said that he knew him tolerably well, and that the last time he saw him was when he, Edwards, was about seventy years of age, when he sent him in a cart to the house of a great gentleman near the aqueduct where he was going to stay on a visit. That Tom was about five feet eight inches high, lusty and very strongly built; that he had something the matter with his right eye; that he was very satirical and very clever; that his wife was a very clever woman and satirical; his two daughters both clever and satirical, and his servant-maid remarkably satirical and clever, and that it was impossible to live with Twm O'r Nant without learning to be clever and satirical; that he

always appeared to be occupied with something, and that he had heard him say there was something in him that would never let him be idle; that he would walk fifteen miles to a place where he was to play an interlude, and that as soon as he got there he would begin playing it at once, however tired he might be. The old gentleman concluded by saying that he had never read the works of Twm O'r Nant, but he had heard that his best piece was the interlude called 'Pleasure and Care.'

CHAPTER LII

The Treachery of the Long Knives—The North Briton—The Wounded Butcher—The Prisoner.

On the tenth of September our little town was flung into some confusion by one butcher having attempted to cut the throat of another. The delinquent was a Welshman, who it was said had for some time past been somewhat out of his mind; the other party was an Englishman, who escaped without further injury than a deep gash in the cheek. The Welshman might be mad, but it appeared to me that there was some method in his madness. He tried to cut the throat of a butcher: didn't this look like wishing to put a rival out of the way? and that butcher an Englishman: didn't this look like wishing to pay back upon the Saxon what the Welsh call bradwriaeth y cyllyll hirion, the treachery of the long knives? So reasoned I to myself. But here perhaps the reader will ask what is meant by 'the treachery of the long knives'? Whether he does or not I will tell him.

Hengist wishing to become paramount in Southern Britain thought that the easiest way to accomplish his wish would be by destroying the South British chieftains. Not believing that he should be able to make away with them by open force he determined to see what he could

do by treachery. Accordingly, he invited the chieftains to a banquet to be held near Stonehenge, or the Hanging Stones, on Salisbury Plain. The unsuspecting chieftains accepted the invitation, and on the appointed day repaired to the banquet, which was held in a huge tent. Hengist received them with a smiling countenance and every appearance of hospitality, and caused them to sit down to table, placing by the side of every Briton one of his own people. The banquet commenced, and all seemingly was mirth and hilarity. Now Hengist had commanded his people that when he should get up and cry 'nemet eoure saxes,' that is, take your knives, each Saxon should draw his long sax or knife, which he wore at his side, and should plunge it into the throat of his neighbour. The banquet went on and in the midst of it, when the unsuspecting Britons were revelling on the good cheer which had been provided for them, and half-drunken with the mead and beer which flowed in torrents, uprose Hengist, and with a voice of thunder uttered the fatal words 'nemet eoure saxes': the cry was obeyed, each Saxon grasped his knife and struck with it at the throat of his defenceless neighbour. Almost every blow took effect; only three British chieftains escaping from the banquet of blood. This infernal carnage the Welsh have appropriately denominated the treachery of the long knives. It will be as well to observe that the Saxons derived their name from the saxes or long knives, which they wore at their sides,

and at the use of which they were terribly proficient.

Two or three days after the attempt at murder at Llangollen, hearing that the Welsh butcher was about to be brought before the magistrates, I determined to make an effort to be present at the examination. Accordingly I went to the police station and inquired of the superintendent whether I could be permitted to attend. He was a North Briton, as I have stated somewhere before, and I had scraped acquaintance with him, and had got somewhat into his good graces by praising Dumfries, his native place, and descanting to him upon the beauties of the poetry of his celebrated countryman, my old friend, Allan Cunningham, some of whose works he had perused, and with whom, as he said, he had once the honour of shaking hands. In reply to my question he told me that it was doubtful whether any examination would take place, as the wounded man was in a very weak state, but that if I would return in half-an-hour he would let me know. I went away, and at the end of the half-hour returned, when he told me that there would be no public examination owing to the extreme debility of the wounded man, but that one of the magistrates was about to proceed to his house and take his deposition in the presence of the criminal and also of the witnesses of the deed, and that if I pleased I might go along with him, and he had no doubt that the magistrate would have no objection to my being present. We set out together: as we were

going along I questioned him about the state of the country and gathered from him that there was occasionally a good deal of crime in Wales.

'Are the Welsh a clannish people?' I demanded.

'Very,' said he.

'As clannish as the Highlanders?' said I.

'Yes,' said he, 'and a good deal more.'

We came to the house of the wounded butcher, which was some way out of the town in the north-western suburb. The magistrate was in the lower apartment with the clerk, one or two officials, and the surgeon of the town. He was a gentleman of about two or three and forty, with a military air and large moustaches, for besides being a Justice of the Peace and a landed proprietor, he was an officer in the army. He made me a polite bow when I entered, and I requested of him permission to be present at the examination. He hesitated a moment and then asked me my motive for wishing to be present at it.

'Merely curiosity,' said I.

He then observed that as the examination would be a private one, my being permitted or not was quite optional.

'I am aware of that,' said I, 'and if you think my remaining is objectionable I will forthwith retire.' He looked at the clerk, who said there could be no objection to my staying, and turning round to his superior said something to him which I did not hear, whereupon the magistrate again bowed and said that he should be very happy to grant my request.

We went upstairs and found the wounded man in bed with a bandage round his forehead, and his wife sitting by his bedside. The magistrate and his officials took their seats, and I was accommodated with a chair. Presently the prisoner was introduced under the charge of a policeman. He was a fellow somewhat above thirty, of the middle size, and wore a dirty white frock coat; his right arm was partly confined by a manacle—a young girl was sworn, who deposed that she saw the prisoner run after the other with something in his hand. The wounded man was then asked whether he thought he was able to make a deposition; he replied in a very feeble tone that he thought he was, and after being sworn, deposed that on the preceding Saturday, as he was going to his stall, the prisoner came up to him and asked whether he had ever done him any injury? he said no. 'I then,' said he, 'observed the prisoner's countenance undergo a change, and saw him put his hand to his waistcoat-pocket and pull out a knife. I straight became frightened, and ran away as fast as I could; the prisoner followed, and overtaking me, stabbed me in the face. I ran into the yard of a public-house and into the shop of an acquaintance, where I fell down, the blood spouting out of my wound.' Such was the deposition of the wounded butcher. He was then asked whether there had been any quarrel between him and the prisoner? He said there had been no quarrel, but that he had refused to drink with the prisoner when he requested him, which he

had done very frequently, and had more than once told him that he did not wish for his acquaintance. The prisoner, on being asked, after the usual caution, whether he had anything to say, said that he merely wished to mark the man but not to kill him. The surgeon of the place deposed to the nature of the wound, and on being asked his opinion with respect to the state of the prisoner's mind, said that he believed that he might be labouring under a delusion. After the prisoner's bloody weapon and coat had been produced he was committed.

It was generally said that the prisoner was disordered in his mind; I held my tongue, but judging from his look and manner I saw no reason to suppose that he was any more out of his senses than I myself, or any person present, and I had no doubt that what induced him to commit the act was rage at being looked down upon by a quondam acquaintance, who was rising a little in the world, exacerbated by the reflection that the disdainful quondam acquaintance was one of the Saxon race, against which every Welshman entertains a grudge more or less virulent, which, though of course very unchristianlike, is really, brother Englishman, after the affair of the long knives, and two or three other actions of a somewhat similar character of our noble Anglo-Saxon progenitors, with which all Welshmen are perfectly well acquainted, not very much to be wondered at.

CHAPTER LIII

The Dylluan—The Oldest Creatures.

Much rain fell about the middle of the month; in the intervals of the showers I occasionally walked by the banks of the river which speedily became much swollen; it was quite terrible both to the sight and ear near the 'Robber's Leap'; there were breakers above the higher stones at least five feet high and a roar around almost sufficient 'to scare a hundred men.' The pool of Catherine Lingo was strangely altered; it was no longer the quiet pool which it was in summer, verifying the words of the old Welsh poet that the deepest pool of the river is always the stillest in summer and of the softest sound, but a howling turbid gulf, in which branches of trees, dead animals and rubbish were whirling about in the wildest confusion. The nights were generally less rainy than the days, and sometimes by the pallid glimmer of the moon I would take a stroll along some favourite path or road. One night as I was wandering slowly along the path leading through the groves of Pen y Coed I was startled by an unearthly cry—it was the shout of the dylluan or owl, as it flitted over the tops of the trees on its nocturnal business.

Oh, that cry of the dylluan! what a strange

wild cry it is; how unlike any other sound in nature! a cry which no combination of letters can give the slightest idea of. What resemblance does Shakespear's to-whit-to-whoo bear to the cry of the owl? none whatever; those who hear it for the first time never know what it is, however accustomed to talk of the cry of the owl and to-whit-to-whoo. A man might be wandering through a wood with Shakespear's owl-chorus in his mouth, but were he then to hear for the first time the real shout of the owl he would assuredly stop short and wonder whence that unearthly cry could proceed.

Yet no doubt that strange cry is a fitting cry for the owl, the strangest in its habits and look of all birds, the bird of whom by all nations the strangest tales are told. O, what strange tales are told of the owl, especially in connection with its long-lifedness; but of all the strange wild tales connected with the age of the owl, strangest of all is the old Welsh tale. When I heard the owl's cry in the groves of Pen y Coed, that tale rushed into my mind. I had heard it from the singular groom who had taught me to gabble Welsh in my boyhood, and had subsequently read it in an old tattered Welsh story book, which by chance fell into my hands. The reader will perhaps be obliged by my relating it.

'The eagle of the alder grove, after being long married and having had many children by his mate, lost her by death, and became a widower. After some time he took it into his head to marry the owl of the Cowlyd Coomb; but fearing he

should have issue by her, and by that means sully his lineage, he went first of all to the oldest creatures in the world in order to obtain information about her age. First he went to the stag of Fernyside Brae, whom he found sitting by the old stump of an oak, and inquired the age of the owl. The stag said: "I have seen this oak an acorn which is now lying on the ground without either leaves or bark: nothing in the world wore it up but my rubbing myself against it once a day when I got up, so I have seen a vast number of years, but I assure you that I have never seen the owl older or younger than she is to-day. However, there is one older than myself, and that is the salmon-trout of Glyn Llifon." To him went the eagle and asked him the age of the owl and got for answer: "I have a year over my head for every gem on my skin and for every egg in my roe, yet have I always seen the owl look the same; but there is one older than myself, and that is the ousel of Cilgwry." Away went the eagle to Cilgwry, and found the ousel standing upon a little rock, and asked him the age of the owl. Quoth the ousel: "You see that the rock below me is not larger than a man can carry in one of his hands: I have seen it so large that it would have taken a hundred oxen to drag it, and it has never been worn save by my drying my beak upon it once every night, and by my striking the tip of my wing against it in rising in the morning, yet never have I known the owl older or younger than she is to-day. However, there is one older than I, and that is the toad of

Cors Fochnod; and unless he knows her age no one knows it." To him went the eagle and asked the age of the owl, and the toad replied: "I have never eaten anything save what I have sucked from the earth, and have never eaten half my fill in all the days of my life; but do you see those two great hills beside the cross? I have seen the place where they stand level ground, and nothing produced those heaps save what I discharged from my body who have ever eaten so very little—yet never have I known the owl anything else but an old hag who cried Too-hoo-hoo, and scared children with her voice even as she does at present." So the eagle of Gwernabwy; the stag of Fernyside Brae; the salmon-trout of Glyn Llifon; the ousel of Cilgwry; the toad of Cors Fochnod, and the owl of Coomb Cowlyd are the oldest creatures in the world; the oldest of them all being the owl.'

CHAPTER LIV

Chirk—The Middleton Family—Castell y Waen—The Park—The Courtyard—The Young Housekeeper—The Portraits—Melin y Castell—Humble Meal—Fine Chests for the Dead—Hales and Hercules.

THE weather having become fine, myself and family determined to go and see Chirk Castle, a mansion ancient and beautiful, and abounding with all kinds of agreeable and romantic associations. It was founded about the beginning of the fifteenth century by a St. John, Lord of Bletsa, from a descendant of whom it was purchased in the year 1615 by Sir Thomas Middleton, the scion of an ancient Welsh family, who, following commerce, acquired a vast fortune, and was Lord Mayor of London. In the time of the great civil war it hoisted the banner of the King, and under Sir Thomas, the son of the Lord Mayor, made a brave defence against Lambert, the Parliamentary General, though eventually compelled to surrender. It was held successively by four Sir Thomas Middletons, and if it acquired a warlike celebrity under the second, it obtained a peculiarly hospitable one under the fourth, whose daughter, the fruit of a second marriage, became Countess of Warwick and eventually the wife of the poet and moralist Addison. In his time the hospitality of Chirk became the theme of many a bard,

particularly of Huw Morris, who, in one of his songs, has gone so far as to say that were the hill of Cefn Uchaf turned into beef and bread, and the rill Ceiriog into beer or wine, they would be consumed in half a year by the hospitality of Chirk. Though no longer in the hands of one of the name of Middleton, Chirk Castle is still possessed by one of the blood, the mother of the present proprietor being the eldest of three sisters, lineal descendants of the Lord Mayor, between whom in default of an heir male the wide possessions of the Middleton family were divided. This gentleman, who bears the name of Biddulph, is Lord Lieutenant of the County of Denbigh, and notwithstanding his war-breathing name, which is Gothic and signifies Wolf of Battle, is a person of highly amiable disposition, and one who takes great interest in the propagation of the Gospel of peace and love.

To view this place, which, though in English called Chirk Castle, is styled in Welsh Castell y Waen, or the Castle of the Meadow, we started on foot about ten o'clock of a fine bright morning, attended by John Jones. There are two roads from Llangollen to Chirk, one the low or post road, and the other leading over the Berwyn. We chose the latter. We passed by the Yew Cottage which I have described on a former occasion, and began to ascend the mountain, making towards its north-eastern corner. The road at first was easy enough, but higher up became very steep, and somewhat appalling,

being cut out of the side of the hill which shelves precipitously down towards the valley of the Dee. Near the top of the mountain were three lofty beech-trees growing on the very verge of the precipice. Here the road for about twenty yards is fenced on its dangerous side by a wall, parts of which are built between the stems of the trees. Just beyond the wall a truly noble prospect presented itself to our eyes. To the north were bold hills, their sides and skirts adorned with numerous woods and white farm-houses; a thousand feet below us was the Dee and its wondrous Pont y Cysultau. John Jones said that if certain mists did not intervene we might descry 'the sea of Liverpool'; and perhaps the only thing wanting to make the prospect complete was that sea of Liverpool. We were, however, quite satisfied with what we saw, and turning round the corner of the hill reached its top, where for a considerable distance there is level ground, and where, though at a great altitude, we found ourselves in a fair and fertile region, and amidst a scene of busy rural life. We saw fields and inclosures, and here and there corn-stacks, some made, and others not yet completed, about which people were employed, and waggons and horses moving. Passing over the top of the hill, we began to descend the southern side, which was far less steep than the one we had lately surmounted. After a little way the road descended through a wood, which John Jones told us was the beginning of 'the Park of Biddulph.'

'There is plenty of game in this wood,' said he; 'pheasant cocks and pheasant hens, to say nothing of hares and coneys; and in the midst of it there is a space sown with a particular kind of corn for the support of the pheasant hens and pheasant cocks which in the shooting-season afford pleasant sport for Biddulph and his friends.'

Near the foot of the descent, just where the road made a turn to the east, we passed by a building which stood amidst trees, with a pond and barns near it.

'This,' said John Jones, 'is the house where the bailiff lives who farms and buys and sells for Biddulph, and fattens the beeves and swine, and the geese, ducks, and other poultry which Biddulph consumes at his table.'

The scenery was now very lovely, consisting of a mixture of hill and dale, open space and forest, in fact the best kind of park scenery. We caught a glimpse of a lake in which John Jones said there were generally plenty of swans, and presently saw the castle, which stands on a green grassy slope from which it derives its Welsh name of Castell y Waen; gwaen in the Cumrian language signifying a meadow or uninclosed place. It fronts the west, the direction from which we were coming; on each side it shows five towers, of which the middlemost, which protrudes beyond the rest and at the bottom of which is the grand gate, is by far the bulkiest. A noble edifice it looked, and to my eye bore no slight resemblance to Windsor Castle.

Seeing a kind of ranger we inquired of him what it was necessary for us to do, and by his direction proceeded to the southern side of the castle and rung the bell at a small gate. The southern side had a far more antique appearance than the western; huge towers with small windows, and partly covered with ivy, frowned down upon us. A servant making his appearance, I inquired whether we could see the house; he said we could, and that the housekeeper would show it to us in a little time, but that at present she was engaged. We entered a large quadrangular court: on the left-hand side was a door and staircase leading into the interior of the building, and farther on was a gateway, which was no doubt the principal entrance from the park. On the eastern side of the spacious court was a kennel, chained to which was an enormous dog, partly of the bloodhound, partly of the mastiff species, who occasionally uttered a deep magnificent bay. As the sun was hot we took refuge from it under the gateway, the gate of which at the farther end, towards the park, was closed. Here my wife and daughter sat down on a small brass cannon, seemingly a six-pounder, which stood on a very dilapidated carriage; from the appearance of the gun, which was of an ancient form and very much battered, and that of the carriage, I had little doubt that both had been in the castle at the time of the siege. As my two loved ones sat, I walked up and down, recalling to my mind all I had heard and read in connection with this castle. I

thought of its gallant defence against the men of Oliver; I thought of its roaring hospitality in the time of the fourth Sir Thomas; and I thought of the many beauties who had been born in its chambers, had danced in its halls, had tripped across its court, and had subsequently given heirs to illustrious families.

At last we were told that the housekeeper was waiting for us. The housekeeper, who was a genteel, good-looking young woman, welcomed us at the door which led into the interior of the house. After we had written our names, she showed us into a large room or hall on the right-hand side on the ground floor, where were some helmets and ancient halberts, and also some pictures of great personages. The floor was of oak, and so polished and slippery, that walking upon it was attended with some danger. Wishing that John Jones, our faithful attendant, who remained timidly at the doorway, should participate with us in the wonderful sights we were about to see, I inquired of the housekeeper whether he might come with us. She replied with a smile that it was not the custom to admit guides into the apartments, but that he might come provided he chose to take off his shoes; adding, that the reason she wished him to take off his shoes was an apprehension that if he kept them on he would injure the floors with their rough nails. She then went to John Jones, and told him in English that he might attend us provided he took off his shoes; poor John, however, only smiled and said 'Dim Saesneg!'

'You must speak to him in your native language,' said I, 'provided you wish him to understand you—he has no English.'

'I am speaking to him in my native language,' said the young housekeeper, with another smile; 'and if he has no English, I have no Welsh.'

'Then you are English?' said I.

'Yes,' she replied, 'a native of London.'

'Dear me,' said I. 'Well, it 's no bad thing to be English after all; and as for not speaking Welsh, there are many in Wales who would be glad to have much less Welsh than they have.' I then told John Jones the condition on which he might attend us, whereupon he took off his shoes with great glee and attended us, holding them in his hand.

We presently went upstairs to what the housekeeper told us was the principal drawing-room, and a noble room it was, hung round with the portraits of kings and queens and the mighty of the earth. Here, on canvas, was noble Mary, the wife of William of Orange, and her consort by her side, whose part like a true wife she always took. Here was wretched Mary of Scotland, the murderess of her own lord. Here were the two Charleses, and both the Dukes of Ormond—the great Duke who fought stoutly in Ireland against Papist and Roundhead; and the Pretender's Duke who tried to stab his native land and died a foreign colonel. And here, amongst other daughters of the house, was the very proud daughter of the house, the Warwick Dowager who married the Spectator, and led him the life of a

dog. She looked haughty and cold and not particularly handsome; but I could not help gazing with a certain degree of interest and respect on the countenance of the vixen, who served out the gentility worshipper in such prime style. Many were the rooms which we entered, of which I shall say nothing, save that they were noble in size and rich in objects of interest. At last we came to what was called the picture gallery. It was a long panelled room extending nearly the whole length of the northern side. The first thing which struck us on entering was the huge skin of a lion stretched out upon the floor; the head, however, which was towards the door, was stuffed, and with its monstrous teeth looked so formidable and lifelike that we were almost afraid to touch it. Against every panel was a portrait; amongst others was that of Sir Thomas Middleton, the stout governor of the castle during the time of the siege. Near to it was the portrait of his rib, Dame Middleton. Farther down on the same side were two portraits of Nell Gwynn; the one painted when she was a girl; the other when she had attained a more mature age. They were both by Lely, the Apelles of the Court of wanton Charles. On the other side was one of the Duke of Gloucester, the son of Queen Anne, who, had he lived, would have kept the Georges from the throne. In this gallery on the southern side was a cabinet of ebony and silver, presented by Charles the Second to the brave warrior Sir Thomas, and which according to tradition cost seven thousand pounds. This

room, which was perhaps the most magnificent in the castle, was the last we visited. The candle of God whilst we wandered through these magnificent halls was flaming in the firmament, and its rays, penetrating through the long narrow windows, showed them off and all the gorgeous things which they contained to great advantage. When we left the castle we all said, not excepting John Jones, that we had never seen in our lives anything more princely and delightful than the interior.

After a little time, my wife and daughter complaining of being rather faint, I asked John Jones whether there was an inn in the neighbourhood where some refreshment could be procured. He said there was, and that he would conduct us to it. We directed our course towards the east, rousing successively, and setting a-scampering, three large herds of deer—the common ones were yellow and of no particular size—but at the head of each herd we observed a big old black fellow with immense antlers ; one of these was particularly large ,indeed as huge as a bull. We soon came to the verge of a steep descent, down which we went, not without some risk of falling. At last we came to a gate ; it was locked ; however, on John Jones shouting, an elderly man with his right hand bandaged came and opened it. I asked him what was the matter with his hand, and he told me that he had lately lost three fingers, whilst working at a saw-mill up at the castle. On my inquiring about the inn he said he was the master of it, and led the way to a

long neat low house nearly opposite to a little bridge over a brook, which ran down the valley towards the north. I ordered some ale and bread-and-butter, and whilst our repast was being got ready John Jones and I went to the bridge.

'This bridge, sir,' said John, 'is called Pont y Velin Castell, the bridge of the Castle Mill; the inn was formerly the mill of the castle, and is still called Melin y Castell. As soon as you are over the bridge you are in shire Amwythig, which the Saxons call Shropshire. A little way up on yon hill is Clawdd Offa or Offa's dyke, built of old by the Brenin Offa in order to keep us poor Welsh within our bounds.'

As we stood on the bridge I inquired of Jones the name of the brook which was running merrily beneath it.

'The Ceiriog, sir,' said John, 'the same river that we saw at Pont y Meibion.'

'The river,' said I, 'which Huw Morris loved so well, whose praises he has sung, and which he has introduced along with Cefn Uchaf in a stanza in which he describes the hospitality of Chirk Castle in his day, and which runs thus:

'Pe byddai 'r Cefn Ucha,
Yn gig ac yn fara,
A Cheiriog fawr yma'n fir aml bob tro,
Rhy ryfedd fae iddyn'
Barhâu hanner blwyddyn,
I wyr bob yn gan-nyn ar ginio.'

'A good penill that, sir,' said John Jones. 'Pity that the halls of great people no longer

flow with rivers of beer, nor have mountains of bread and beef for all comers.'

'No pity at all,' said I; 'things are better as they are. Those mountains of bread and beef, and those rivers of ale merely encouraged vassalage, fawning and idleness; better to pay for one's dinner proudly and independently at one's inn, than to go and cringe for it at a great man's table.'

We crossed the bridge, walked a little way up the hill which was beautifully wooded, and then retraced our steps to the little inn, where I found my wife and daughter waiting for us, and very hungry. We sat down, John Jones with us, and proceeded to dispatch our bread-and-butter and ale. The bread-and-butter were good enough, but the ale poorish. O, for an Act of Parliament to force people to brew good ale! After finishing our humble meal, we got up and having paid our reckoning went back into the park, the gate of which the landlord again unlocked for us.

We strolled towards the north along the base of the hill. The imagination of man can scarcely conceive a scene more beautiful than the one which we were now enjoying. Huge oaks studded the lower side of the hill, towards the top was a belt of forest, above which rose the eastern walls of the castle; the whole forest, castle and the green bosom of the hill glorified by the lustre of the sun. As we proceeded we again roused the deer, and again saw three old black fellows, evidently the patriarchs of the herds, with their

white enormous horns; with these ancient gentlefolks I very much wished to make acquaintance, and tried to get near them, but no! they would suffer no such thing; off they glided, their white antlers, like the barked top boughs of old pollards, glancing in the sunshine, the smaller dappled creatures following them bounding and frisking. We had again got very near the castle when John Jones told me that if we would follow him he would show us something very remarkable; I asked him what it was.

'Llun Cawr,' he replied. 'The figure of a giant.'

'What giant?' said I.

But on this point he could give me no information. I told my wife and daughter what he had said, and finding that they wished to see the figure, I bade John Jones lead us to it. He led us down an avenue just below the eastern side of the castle; noble oaks and other trees composed it, some of them probably near a hundred feet high; John Jones observing me looking at them with admiration, said:

'They would make fine chests for the dead, sir.'

What an observation! how calculated, amidst the most bounding joy and bliss, to remind man of his doom! A moment before I had felt quite happy, but now I felt sad and mournful. I looked at my wife and daughter, who were gazing admiringly on the beauteous scenes around them, and remembered that in a few short years at most we should all three be laid in the cold

narrow house formed of four elm or oaken boards, our only garment the flannel shroud, the cold damp earth above us instead of the bright glorious sky. O, how sad and mournful I became! I soon comforted myself, however, by reflecting that such is the will of Heaven, and that Heaven is good.

After we had descended the avenue some way John Jones began to look about him, and getting on the bank on the left side disappeared. We went on and in a little time saw him again beckoning to us some way farther down, but still on the bank. When we drew nigh to him he bade us get on the bank; we did so and followed him some way amidst furze and lyng. All of a sudden he exclaimed, 'There it is!' We looked and saw a large figure standing on a pedestal. On going up to it we found it to be a Hercules leaning on his club, indeed a copy of the Farnese Hercules, as we gathered from an inscription in Latin partly defaced. We felt rather disappointed, as we expected that it would have turned out to be the figure of some huge Welsh champion of old. We, however, said nothing to our guide. John Jones, in order that we might properly appreciate the size of the statue by contrasting it with his own body, got upon the pedestal and stood up beside the figure, to the elbow of which his head little more than reached.

I told him that in my country, the eastern part of Lloegr, I had seen a man quite as tall as the statue.

'Indeed, sir,' said he; 'who is it?'

'Hales, the Norfolk giant,' I replied, 'who has a sister seven inches shorter than himself, who is yet seven inches taller than any man in the county when her brother is out of it.'

When John Jones got down he asked me who the man was whom the statue was intended to represent.

'Erchwl,' I replied, 'a mighty man of old, who with his club cleared the country of thieves, serpents, and monsters.'

I now proposed that we should return to Llangollen, whereupon we retraced our steps, and had nearly reached the farm-house of the castle when John Jones said that we had better return by the low road, by doing which we should see the castle-lodge and also its gate which was considered one of the wonders of Wales. We followed his advice and passing by the front of the castle northwards soon came to the lodge. The lodge had nothing remarkable in its appearance, but the gate which was of iron was truly magnificent.

On the top were two figures of wolves which John Jones supposed to be those of foxes. The wolf of Chirk is not intended to be expressive of the northern name of its proprietor, but is the armorial bearing of his family by the maternal side, and originated in one Ryred, surnamed Blaidd or Wolf from his ferocity in war, from whom the family, which only assumed the name of Middleton in the beginning of the thirteenth

century, on the occasion of its representative marrying a rich Shropshire heiress of that name, traces descent.

The wolf of Chirk is a Cambrian not a Gothic wolf, and though 'a wolf of battle,' is the wolf not of Biddulph but of Ryred.

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